The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE COMMONWEAL'S SPANISH RELIEF FUND

IT IS high time that the pestilent fog of false propaganda now veiling the appalling facts of the Spanish horror should be blown away by the wind of truth. THE COMMONWEAL and a few newspapers and other journals both here and in England have tried almost in vain, so far, to give news from all parts of Spain, and as objectively as possible, as the free press of democratic countries should. (See Open Letter to the Press, page 33.) We are not concerned with politics. But we believe that a combination of European nations should intervene in Spain and hold a genuine plebiscite in all parts of Spain to determine what form of government is really most strongly supported by the people. Meanwhile, we must help the victims.

When the Brooklyn *Tablet* showed the way to accomplish at least part of their plain duty, as Christians, and as American lovers of liberty and justice, to the Catholics of the United States by starting a drive for the collection of funds with which to assist the hapless victims of the war between the two factions in Spain, THE COMMONWEAL assisted by collecting such amounts as its limited number of readers cared to send to us for transmission to the *Tablet*, or by urging them to send their contributions directly to the *Tablet*. We also urged other Catholic papers to follow the example set by our energetic and practical neighbor. Several thousand dollars came to this office. More than $38,000 has so far reached the *Tablet*, and we hope and trust that the amount will soon reach $100,000. Meanwhile, this paper felt uneasily conscious that its practical part in this highly necessary work of Christian charity and common, decent humanity has been very slight. A preliminary account of what we now propose to do, with the aid of our readers, and with the further cooperation of the *Tablet*, and of the Catholic press and public in general, will be found on the back page in the advertisement of

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the mass meeting to be held in Madison Square Garden, on Wednesday night, May 19. More complete details will be published in our next numbers, and in advertisements and new stories in the Catholic and secular press.

What attention the secular press will pay to the matter, remains to be seen, and we invite our readers to aid us in ascertaining the measure in which the secular press gives justice to Catholics, as well as sympathy and support and abundant publicity to the Communist and Anarchist enemies of Christianity and of all religions, and of civilized society as well. So far, the record of the secular press, in England as well as in this country, has been deplorably bad, as journalism: the essence of which is the ascertaining and the reporting of facts. Editorial expressions of opinion are useless and dangerous when based upon incomplete, not to say biased, reporting. In our Open Letter to the Press, found elsewhere in this issue, we state some of the reasons for accusing the directive officers and owners and shareholders in the profit-making ownership of our great newspapers and news associations of having flagrantly fallen down in their reporting of the facts in Spain; to say nothing, for the present, about the still more condemnable fact that in part at least the reporting and the interpretation of the news from Spain, and particularly in Spain, has been left to men and women who if not actually in the pay of Communist Russia, and the Anarchists, are completely sympathetic with the Reds who control, and have for months controlled, the so-called "representative, democratic Republic of Spain."

Information upholding these serious charges is now in our hands, to be supplemented rapidly and copiously by further reports and documents now being gathered in Spain and London and Paris and Rome, and which will speedily be placed before the American public, through various channels, including a book which will be a most astounding revelation of the falsity of the tainted news and the outrageous propaganda thinly disguised as "news" which has deluged England and the United States for months.

While this work is being done, however, a highly necessary job is facing American Catholics and, indeed, all Americans, no matter what their form of religion may be, who still are good Americans, and desire, therefore, not to welcome impostors into the temple of true Democracy which all Americans, and the British, and the French, and the Scandinavians, and the Irish, and the Swiss, and the Belgians, and the Dutch, and the Poles, should struggle, and struggle unitedly, to protect and to extend. This job is to succor and comfort, so far as they can, the victims of the frightful struggle in Spain.

The governments of the United States, France, England and other countries have been informed by their representatives in Spain that the lowest, most conservative estimate of the number of men, women and children ruthlessly slaughtered not on the field of battle, or in assaults upon cities and forts, but massacred by the Reds, is as follows:

	Killed
The Madrid area	60,000
The Valencia area	30,000
The Barcelona area	50,000
	140,000

How many of these were practising Catholics, bishops, monks, nuns, priests, Brothers, teachers and the laity, will never be definitely known, but the number will certainly run into tens of thousands.

The starvation, the torturing hunger, the homeless and workless and desolate condition of millions of others, refugees, hapless victims, especially, of course, women and children, beggars all description. And description is not even being attempted, so far as that part of Spain not dominated by the Reds, and not being reported by the American and British press—with certain honorable and rare exceptions—is concerned.

Fortunately, and of course quite naturally, as Arnold Lunn says in writing from Spain for the London *Tablet*, "the persecution has enriched the martyrology of the Church with stories as beautiful as those which come down to us from the first centuries. I owe this story to the Bishop of Gibraltar. A priest was being led to his death. He was bound. As he faced his executioners he said, 'I want to bless you. Please free my hands.' A Red cut the ropes and then hacked off his hands. 'Bless us now,' he sneered. And the priest did bless him, moving about his bleeding stumps till he died."

The special correspondent of THE COMMONWEAL, who will soon be back in Spain, after completing his work in Rome and London of gathering together the most accurate statistics available as to the slaughter of priests and nuns and laity, relates in his forthcoming narrative the story of a dinner party in Madrid given by a prominent man who had joined the Reds, and got a card as a member of the Communist party. At the dinner, attended by THE COMMONWEAL correspondent—a man of unimpeachable reputation, as the world will soon know—two Reds boasted of the atrocities they themselves had committed, unwitting of the fact that the two servants who waited on them were nuns in disguise and that a priest, the son of a dear friend of the host, was hiding, but within earshot of the horrible confessions of the two champions of "democracy."

We confidently but most earnestly call upon our readers for their moral support; their prayers above all; and next, their money. Send contributions at once so that preliminary expenses of the mass meeting may be adequately and promptly met.

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Week by Week

CONSIDERABLE speculation on what Mr. Roosevelt's budget message implies was, perhaps, the most notable occurrence of the week. Three things were stressed by the document: that tax receipts had fallen below expectations, and that further taxation was undesirable; that every effort must be made to curtail expenditures and to liquidate funds owed to the government; and that there will remain a quite formidable deficit for the year. The prevailing tendency was critical not of the unbalanced budget in itself, but of inability to equalize receipts and expenditures in a period of industrial prosperity. If (it was suggested) the President cannot put the Federal Treasury on a sound business basis now, when will he be able to do so? Opponents of the administration held that "easy ways" of curtailing expenditures would not suffice, and thought it probable that the outcome would be further taxation later on. Perhaps, however, it would be well to ask why receipts were so far behind expectations and why the deficit persists. A variety of reports indicate that there has been a great increase in rural income, despite droughts and floods of almost unparalleled severity. It is likewise reliably asserted that employment and payroll figures are definitely optimistic. Income has been distributed in a highly gratifying manner. Nevertheless the improvement is, probably in most instances, still insufficient to place the average family receipts above the tax-exemption level. Prices have also risen very fast, so that outside-normal expenditures are still below the average. Meanwhile a great body of persons who once enjoyed a moderate private investment income still remain victims of the depression. Speculative use of money has been notably curtailed, and all forms of interest are lower. One may therefore properly conclude that this is not a regulation "boom year" in the sense previously employed. Of course an unbalanced federal budget is not thereby rendered easier to contemplate, but at least some explanation of why it is unbalanced may not be out of place.

The Trend of Events

THAT there are a number of ways in which expenditures might be curtailed no one will doubt. Emergency government activities are uniformly expensive, both because they produce nothing and because they are almost necessarily inefficient. Accordingly they should be overhauled or discontinued as soon as possible. Unfortunately the moment of action is dependent upon widespread knowledge of how much they cost; and under existing conditions this knowledge is obscured by hidden taxes. Our government would be a great deal more of a bargain if it were conceivable that most of the cash to run it could be levied through direct income taxes. But who has heard of any political party being pledged to such a taxation policy? That is politically unthinkable, and so it is incongruous to clamor on the one hand for democratic methods of government and on the other hand to demand a benevolent dictator willing to assume responsibility for hitting every citizen in broad daylight. Furthermore the principal emergency expenditure is still relief. We all know that it is not administered frugally or efficiently. Nevertheless government does accomplish in a rough way what it needs to do. Every city and town in the nation would be appalled if the system built up since 1933 were not abrogated but even modified in any important way.

IT IS no derogation of the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Administrative Assistant of that Bureau, to say that their recent utterances on the subject of crime prevention and detection are truisms. It is the character of a truism that it is always true, and usually important to boot: so important that its constant rediscovery and reiteration by mankind gives it the dangerous casing of a cliche. This tendency to evade deep-lying facts and difficulties by the expedient of a fixed formulation is one of the continuing problems of society, and there is a peculiar injustice in visiting criticism on those who oppose that tendency in the name of duty. It is thus entirely in the honorable sense that we characterize as truisms Mr. Nichols's ten points of crime prevention, and Mr. Hoover's appeal for the right kind of publicity and the sane kind of parole, in the country's war on crime. Mr. Nichols wants, among other things, decent homes for youth, proper physical recreation, character-training in the schools and an awakening of the individual conscience throughout the nation to a sense of general responsibility for crime prevention. Mr. Hoover wants the press to print the real and entire truth about criminals, including criminally inefficient enforcement bodies and criminally corrupt politicians who put pressure on the police; and he also wants a parole system that will not let unreformed criminals loose upon society. We have heard these things before; perhaps we may be a little weary of hearing them. But to what extent have we heeded them? Not appreciably, if Mr. Hoover's further summary is correct—and of course it is: to quote from the New York *Times*, "1,333,526 major crimes" for last year, "a murder or manslaughter every forty minutes, a robbery every ten minutes, a burglary every two minutes, a case of larceny every forty-four seconds." Obviously there is more active work cut out for every

Vital Truisms

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mother's son of us than to grow restive and demand something new when this "old stuff" is put before us.

STEPS now being taken by Belgium to alter its political situation in Europe are so indicative of major changes in outlook that they deserve notice. After the war and the hatred it had engendered were relatively things of the past, Belgium sat with other powers and underwrote the Locarno Treaties. Stresemann and Briand had sponsored these agreements, which pledged all major governments to respect the western boundary of Germany as fixed at Versailles. They believed that a great service had been rendered the cause of amity, and even surmised that a future "United States" of Europe might some day look back upon Locarno as its place of origin. But today Belgium has withdrawn from that agreement, following avowal of German intent to go its own way. Locarno is therefore dead. Belgium has reverted to its prewar status, as a country pledged to neutrality and guaranteed against invasion by France and Great Britain. This guarantee will constitute one of the most important rearmament moves in the race now in progress. For it is not thinkable that the guarantors can avoid shaping their military policy in accordance with what they have agreed—by reason of necessity, of course—to do. And so there is reemphasized once again the present drift toward isolation and the threat of war. Every reasonable argument favors Locarno and the eventual establishment of a "United States" of Europe, but every hard fact is on the side of those who agree with Thomas Mann that "the spirit of peace has decided to oppose the spirit of Mars with its own weapons." All one can hope for is that, somehow, the result will not be another 1914.

Belgium and the Europe of 1937

A MEMORIAL to Father Duffy, chaplain of the 69th New York, has been unveiled. We can think of no action more in keeping with these times. He was no militarist, Heaven knows, either before or after the battles in which his regiment took part. Knowing that men need a priest more when they are in military service than on any other occasion, he served them loyally, simply and bravely. Of course he was an American, too—not of the soil but of the city—possessed of that marvelous readiness to accept things as they come which makes some of us good soldiers and passable gentlemen. Father Duffy never condescended to anybody, and to the best of our knowledge he was never condescended to. He had a theory of life, religious at the core but firm and broad enough to include other things, too. Tramping about the Vosges or the country where Joyce Kilmer fell, he learned to know the meaninglessness of pose as well as anybody has learned it. There was in his disposition no tendency to get out on a limb, but he shied from no danger that was the offspring of necessity. In short, he was a fine and representative citizen of the great community of the Church. It is good to know that he has been remembered, as generals are sometimes commemorated. But all those in the ranks who pass by the stone set to his memory will think of him as one of themselves. All this is symbolic of what has made the Church in this country so popular and so strong—its avoidance of theatrical airs and of class distinctions; its readiness to serve and to be served, loyally and straightforwardly; and its holy simplicity, born in part of reverence for human nature. Let us hope these things are never lost.

To Father Duffy

THE FIRST reaction to the news that the girlhood home in Baltimore of the lady whom the Duke of Windsor will presently marry, has been opened to the public as a museum, will probably be simply wonder not unmixed with quiet distress. The type of enterprise represented in the buying and "restoring" of an unpretentious brick boarding-house to help keep alive a public thrill that is at best sentimental and at worst snobbish and in no event connected with any sort of merited tribute for high virtue or disinterested service, is baffling to people of taste and decorum. However, it evidently represents a shrewd divination of the public wishes; for already it is reported that a goodly number have paid their fifty-cent fee to walk through the ordinary rooms and sign the register. And perhaps, on reflection, the whole business is not without precedent—or even so bad as some of the precedents. Those conspicuous socially or romantically—or sordidly—seem to draw in this way: the concrete details of their lives feed some mass hunger. There was the lesson of the old Chambers of Horror—repeated, indeed, in some features of modern journalism. And in the more genteel brackets, it is surely fair to note the showing of great artistocratic homes on "public days"—England comes to mind, though the custom may have also prevailed elsewhere. It is true that such homes are often true museums, repositories of historic and artistic treasures; but surely it is not in quest of the historic or the artistic that the general mob passes their sacred portals; it is to gratify a much simpler and more vulgar and universal curiosity. This kind of goblin democracy—the wish to see, hear, taste, smell and feel all the particulars of the lives of those who excite envy or curiosity—is really very old, and perhaps we have occasion to be thankul that the current instance in Baltimore is (relatively) so mild.

Public Consumption

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OPEN LETTER TO LEADERS OF THE AMERICAN PRESS, ON SPAIN

By MICHAEL WILLIAMS

This Open Letter has been sent to several hundred gentlemen occupying executive or directing or writing posts with the news agencies and papers of this country. It has also been given in condensed form to news agencies supplying material to the religious press. In later articles THE COMMONWEAL *will return to the subject. Material for these articles is being gathered by competent research workers and trained journalists both in Europe and in this country and will be published in book form.—The Editors.*

TO THE Directors, Stock Holders, Editors and Writers of the American Press. — Gentlemen: In an article written by me and published in THE COMMONWEAL for April 9, I gave reasons for believing that a large number of American writers and editors, of "liberal" and "democratic" political affiliation, have been deluded by their own sympathy for what they consider to be the "democratic" character of the so-called "legitimate" government of Spain—or else have been skilfully led astray by the adroit propaganda preached by their stronger-headed Communist associates.

In this letter I shall briefly state some of the reasons for suspecting (to say the least) that the greater part of the American secular press has failed in its job of gathering and distributing unbiased and reliable news from both the rival camps in Spain; and from the parts of Spain controlled by the contending armies and governments. And it is largely because of this glaring failure, or inability, of the news associations and news-gathering departments of the daily papers adequately to report both sides of the conflict in Spain that the editorial writers, magazine writers, commentators, lecturers, radio speakers and "liberal" Protestant clergymen are failing in their efforts to "interpret" the true meaning, and the probable effects, of the tremendous struggle now going on in the ravaged land—a struggle in which all Europe is critically involved, and in which the United States is vitally concerned.

I shall begin by stating my belief that the main cause for the pro-"Loyalist" attitude of the greater part of the American press, and also of the greater part of the American public, is one that is wholly to their credit. It is their instinctive sympathy for what they believe to be a "democratic" movement. And when they apply this just, and honorable, and most commendable motive to the job of gathering the news, they fail to be objective, and so they concentrate on one part of that news, and in trying to interpret it editorially, the directors of the American press (along with the majority of their correspondents and commentators) have themselves become unconscious propagandists (in the invidious sense of that term), and have allowed their natural American affinity for, and desire to promote, all efforts considered by them to be akin to the processes of American democracy, unduly to influence their work as journalists, so that they are now giving the American public a deplorably one-sided—and therefore a false—picture of the situation in Spain.

Since the first frightful days of the Spanish tragedy, especially after the massacre of priests and nuns and lay Catholics slackened, it is demonstrably certain that by far the greater mass of the news sent from Spain by the press associations, and particularly by the special correspondents of the larger daily newspapers, has come from Madrid, from Valencia, and from Barcelona, and the Basque country. This news has been of both a military and a civic character. From Salamanca, and Seville, and, in general, from all the large and increasing portion of Spain held and controlled by the Franco government, there has of late been only meager military news, and scarcely any intelligence concerning the civic conditions of life in what amounts to more than a half, possibly two-thirds, of all the territory of Spain.

As for the type of news, and of interpretation, and of frank, open, powerful and convinced propaganda on behalf of the "Loyalists" distributed by the definitely "radical" press—and particularly by those journals, like the *Nation* and the *New Republic,* which reach so many of the more liberal, and even radical, elements of such influential classes as writers, clergymen, teachers and legislators—it has been utterly unfair. Certainly this is true, so far as their presentation of the Spanish "news" has been concerned. These papers have ignored (or condemned as false) everything from the Franco side; or anything emanating from the Spanish elements not formerly tied up with Franco, but which are allied with him now because of their opposition to what they stigmatize as being the barbarous, subversive and radically undemocratic character displayed by the "Loyalist" government. Ever since the futile and bewildered little group of genuine republicans and democrats who were put at the head of the Madrid government after the 1936 elections had

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been thrown into the discard, and the Communists (including their Russian bosses) and the fanatical Anarchists took control of the real game being played, with the lives of the Spanish people, and with all their inherited wealth of civilized and religious customs and traditions, as the stakes, the "radical" American reviews (and, of course, the openly Communist papers) have played the game, the rules of which were formulated for them all in Moscow.

Now, it may be said, in exculpation of the news associations and the greater number of the daily newspapers which get their news and views from the news agencies, and from their own special correspondents, that they were, and now are, so badly handicapped by the censorship existing under Franco, and by the notable lack of reliable means of communication in the Franco part of Spain, that it is only natural, and quite inevitable, that the bulk of their information should come from Madrid and Valencia, and from the places in France directed, as to their distribution of news (and of views) from Madrid, or Valencia—just as the main sources of news and views in Madrid and Valencia themselves are largely, if not wholly, directed by Russian experts in revolutionary propaganda. And there is considerable truth in such a plea—if it should be made. The Franco groups are conspicuously inferior to the groups on the other side in their understanding of the value of public opinion, and of the ways in which it may be reached and influenced. They do not treat the representatives of the foreign press—especially those from the United States—with that cordiality, and camaraderie, and interesting, exhilarating entertainment and appreciation, which the canny experts of the Red side of the struggle lavish upon the clever, enterprising, sympathetic young American correspondents whose natural affinities are more akin to all "democratic" movements than they are to the rigid conservatism of the Spanish grandees, and of the "Right-wing" and "reactionary" parties of which the Franco forces, both military and civil, are largely composed.

Such American correspondents, for the most part, rarely establish friendly relations with the Spanish ecclesiastics, or the Spanish Catholic laymen, who are also a part of the Franco picture. Many of these Catholics may differ greatly in their economic and social ideals and aspirations from the rank reactionaries, and economic exploiters, and antiquated monarchists, and fanatical Fascists, with whom they are now uneasily associated. But, as they themselves proclaim, they are only associated with such elements for a perfectly plain reason which is well known to the readers of the European press, and which, if known to and understood by liberty-loving Americans, would arouse for them in this country true sympathy, and a large measure of moral support. For the plain reason for their present military alliance with Franco and the reactionary Right-wing groups is their knowledge of the appalling truth that the so-called republic which they helped to set up, and which they were prepared patiently and loyally and hopefully to support, was betrayed at its very advent, and was then seized by desperate and determined men, who frankly proclaimed to all the world allowed by the press to hear what they had to say: "Now that we have our republic, let us have our revolution."

They got a revolution—not precisely the one they desired, and had planned: for, as those who know more about the facts of the situation than the American press brings to their attention, the Franco revolution broke out just ahead of the mass-massacre revolution carefully planned by the Reds. The Reds, indeed—so it is charged—had arranged that fake Fascists (desperadoes of their own gang disguised in imitation of young Primo de Rivera's small band of actual Fascists) should create disturbances, in retaliation for which the Reds were to have proceeded at once completely to "liquidate" all members of the Catholic parties, or the Right-wing parties generally. There was also to have been a general wiping out of the clergy and the nuns, and all suspected of any sort of affiliation with, or sympathy for, Catholicism or conservatism, or even with those forms of Catholic "liberalism" which stopped short of actual fraternity with the Reds. The Salamanca government claims to possess evidence proving the existence of a Red plot of this general description. This evidence has satisfied many careful European correspondents, military men, and observers who visited Salamanca from England and elsewhere. It is confirmed by an American witness of unimpeachable experience and integrity as a journalist, whom I hold in reserve. Perhaps this evidence is not conclusive. Possibly it may be faked—such things happen in all propaganda campaigns, as we have good reason to know both in this country and in England. We can remember Mr. Hearst's fake Mexican "documents," and England can remember (if it desires to do so) the famous fake Zinoviev letter.

But:—

Where is the famous enterprise and boasted impartiality of the American press in all this business? Why has not its trustworthy representatives examined this evidence, and reported upon it as to whether it is false, or dubious, or not yet sufficiently proven—or true?

For this is the crux of the moral question as to whether Franco and those supporting him, either before or after his uprising, were justified in joining what has been stigmatized as a revolt against a democratically elected and constitutional government of a free nation, but which Franco and hundreds of thousands of Spaniards who were

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not at first aware of, or in any sympathy with, Franco's plan to overthrow that government, are now convinced was a mere sham.

The only chance that this fake government had of achieving anything resembling the free and fancy picture of a beautiful democratic régime presented to us by so large a part of the American press, was by honestly cooperating with the honestly meant efforts of the Catholics of the middle road (politically speaking, not religiously) who accepted the doctrine of collaboration with the republic urged upon them by *El Debate,* the great and influential Catholic daily, and by the party led by Gil Robles.

But that government did nothing of the sort. It could not do so even if its members who were sincerely democratic had so desired (as many of them did desire), for that government was powerless from its start, save for the power which was exerted by the Communists and the Anarchists behind the façade of intellectuals, journalists, idealists and facile politicians, who at first held Cabinet jobs; by Largo Caballero and his ilk; and more especially by Russian agents like the Soviet Ambassador, Rosenberg; and by scores, and soon hundreds, and then thousands, of other Russian, and Italian, and French, and German, and English, and Polish, and American Communists, and sympathizers with Communism.

Largo Caballero made no bones about the matter. He was quite frank. He did not speak the vague sentimental neologisms employed by so many emotional American liberals. Many of these were active correspondents, in the service of the American press. Some of them were—and are—active members of Communist groups. Of course, most correspondents did not sell out to the Reds, nor consciously betray their duty to the American public. But as a fact, I hold, most of them became unconsciously agents of the Red propaganda from the start by virtue of their sympathy with its professed "democratic" objectives. Their just hatred of Nazism, and Fascism, and their conviction that a "popular front" of all parties and factions and persons opposing Fascism was not only possible but acutely desirable, deepened that sympathy, and gave it a stronger purpose. So they played the game of the Popular Front. They still are playing it. And the American public is being deceived and led astray on one of the most vital problems in the world.

When Largo Caballero, in April of 1936, accepted for his party the program of the Communist Third International, the secretary of the Communist party, one Diaz, said: "We must proceed to form workers' and peasants' alliances to replace the State the day we overturn it. We must also have one single proletarian militia, the embryo of the Red Army, for the moment when the revolution shall triumph in Spain."

But when Largo Caballero became Prime Minister, did he disavow this declaration of the purposes of his party, so glaringly illegal and unconstitutional, if carried out in action, and totally in opposition to anything resembling democracy as understood in America? He did not. Nor did the American correspondents ask him why he did not. And perhaps it would have been farcical for them to ask such a question after the mask had been dropped from the face of the real spirit animating the so-called "legitimate" government of Spain: for that spirit materialized itself in men who led or encouraged or permitted without dissent one of the worst and most cruel massacres ever recorded in history of bishops, and priests, and nuns, and laymen and laywomen by the tens of thousands. And the vast majority of these hapless victims were sacrificed not to a blind outburst of mere fury, but to a plan: a plan conceived in Moscow, and finding fertile flesh and willing souls for its growth among the Anarchists and Communists of Spain.

That such atrocities, which, it should always be remembered, began before Franco's revolt, and had been advertised brazenly to the world as having been plotted down to the last frightful detail, by the Communist and Anarchist press and radio, that such atrocities, I say, should have brought under Franco's banner all Catholics competent to bear arms, and to the service of his cause all other Catholics of all parties, of all classes of society—with the exception of a handful of rebellious priests, and a small number of denationalized, extremely heterodox intellectuals avowing themselves to be Catholics in small highbrow periodicals more notable for their affinity with economic and sociological radicalism than for the golden mean of Catholic teachings—is a fact wholly natural and understandable. But what has the American press done to reveal the fact, and the solid reasons for that fact?

And it was not Catholics only who were driven into protest and revolt by the revelation of the truth concerning the forces of anti-civilization, anti-democracy, anti-religion, which were in full control of the so-called "legitimate government," both before and after the Franco rising.

There were such men (and many of them) as Señor Alexander Lerroux, for a leading instance of the sort of non-Catholic, sometimes anti-Catholic Spaniards who had worked all their lives to set up a real republic, and who were compelled to denounce the false-face republic by the unveiling of the sinister truth. Señor Lerroux has several times been Prime Minister in the welter of unstable governments which have been the minor plague of Spain for so long. He led the stronger group of the radical element (stronger as to voting strength: but not stronger in genuine political power, for that was held by the Reds) in the coali-

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tion government before the Franco uprising. His political point of view always has been more to the "Left" than, let us say, the views of the bulk of the Labor or Liberal parties in England, or the Farmer-Labor party in America. Moreover, he has always been a strong "anti-clerical." I have no space for the complete statement made by Señor Lerroux in February of this year, and reported in the European press. Possibly it was reported here also; but I have not seen it though others may have been more fortunate: I say "fortunate" because his statement should be welcome to any fair-minded American trying to get at the truth about Spain. But I will give a few extracts. After the army revolt, he said:

> I would like to make it plain that we are not in the presence of a military rising. The army has not broken with discipline; it seeks to restore a discipline broken by anti-patriotic traitors and criminal anarchists; it has not risen against the law, but for the law, so that law and authority should rule; not against the people, but for the safety of the people. . . . It is by no means a question of a military pronunciamento but of a national rising as legitimate and holy as the War of Independence in 1808. . . . The blood toll taken of the Radical party in Spain [who had worked for a republic through democratic means] is far greater than that taken of the Church, and perhaps greater than that taken of the Civil Guard, which was so savagely sacrificed.

And so on, and so forth; a statement different in its wording, but not in its point of view, from that of scores of others made by college professors, writers, politicians, professional men, all of whom had hoped and worked for the coming of some form of authentic representative government in Spain, and who have voiced their sorrow, and their shame, and their agony, because of the awful betrayal of their cause, not by Franco, but by the Red forces, who were trained by experts in deceit and propaganda from Moscow. I could fill an issue of any paper with extracts like that from Señor Lerroux, taken from their letters, from their articles, and from the books written by experts in Spanish history, and Spanish contemporary affairs (such men as Professor Allison Peers, of Liverpool University, England, and Judge Pierre Crabitès, formerly of the Mixed Tribunals, Cairo, Egypt, and for twenty-five years a student of Spanish problems); to say nothing about the articles and statements published or issued in England by members of Parliament, and leading publicists, like Douglas Jerrold, and Arthur Bryant, of the *Illustrated London News*. The latter, for example, in his introduction to the "Second and Third Reports on the Communist Atrocities in Southern Spain between July and October," issued by the Committee of Investigation appointed by the Nationalist government in Salamanca, says:

> The Spanish Civil War has been profoundly misunderstood in this country [England], where it has been seen successively as a military rising, a class struggle and a battle between the contending philosophies of Fascism and Communism. But Spain is not and is never likely to be a Fascist country; the Spanish genius does not admit of such strait-laced restriction. But it is a land, however much misgoverned in the past, with a great tradition of religious faith, personal honor, and courtly conduct. It is to preserve such things from dishonor and destruction that Franco's men are now fighting.

But what of the other side? Ah, of course, there is that other side—there are indeed several sides (among them the Basque and Catalan aspects) of this highly complex problem. But all I am concerned with in this letter is the task of establishing a reasonable case for asking the directors of the American press why they do not give ALL the sides. What is free, honest journalism for, if not for that? And I declare my own conviction, in support of which a mass of strong evidence can be presented, that, on the whole, the American press has presented far more of the facts which uphold the thesis of the Red government than they have of the facts which the European press has given their readers, and which have been either unknown to the American correspondents (and their editors at home: and that is difficult to believe), or which they have consistently ignored—for reasons not yet stated, but implied strongly in many instances by their predominant sympathy for and editorial support of the Reds: for example, in the Scripps-Howard papers, and the New York *Evening Post*, and, no doubt, in hundreds of other papers throughout the country which I have not seen.

Gentlemen—you, the editors, and (more important than the editors) you business men who own the papers and hire and direct the editors and correspondents—I think you are wrong! You are also most unwise, even in regard to your own interests. You cannot get away with such biased and tendentious journalism indefinitely. Your readers are being deceived, and they will come to learn that fact—even as millions of readers took the measure of the unscrupulous partiality of a large part of the press during the 1936 political campaign. Such conduct, becoming steadily more pronounced, and rapidly more evident even to the hurried man in the street—plus your scandalous scavenging amid the sordid crimes of the great cities for juicy garbage and worse pictures (though many of you are still far too honorable, and decent, thank God, to be found in that evil galley!)—is deeply undercutting your prestige, and your ethical function in a free democracy. Sooner or later, it will subvert that which is far more important to most of you who are owners and stockholders in the giant industry of

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the press than your ethical purpose—namely, your profits, and your political and economic power.

Take my tip. I am not merely the editor of a small Catholic weekly, and a writer of books read by a handful of readers interested in the apparently feeble (but re-arising) power of religion. For twenty-five years before I turned to such tasks (and to such high interests: which are the things of primary concern, no matter how inadequate may be my handling of them), I was a reporter, a special correspondent, an editor, for newspapers from Boston to San Francisco, from New York to Rome. I am still a reporter. I still have a sense for news. And I tell you that the news I learn in my many journeys throughout this country, and my parleying with all sorts and conditions of mankind, is that the palpable degradation of the press is one of the most strongly held opinions, one of the views, for which a greater mass of evident proofs are available, than for almost any other of the multiform problems of our age of crisis.

Among you there are, even yet (and God be thanked for the fact), many stanch upholders of the truly American tradition and practise of honest reporting, the impartial gathering of all aspects of all stories fit to print, and of a genuine desire to be candid and fair in your interpretation of news events. Some of you still know the inspiration of the spirit of enterprise in digging up hidden facts, or revealing obscure ones. To you, I appeal. After the main job of the daily press has been fairly done (to the best of your ability, of course; and I fully realize the handicaps presented by censorship, especially in the Spanish war, or in Germany), that is to say, the job of collecting facts, it is your proper function to give the frank, fearless expression of your own opinions. Far be it from me to object to your opinions, or condemn those of you who support the Valencia government out of a genuine conviction that it represents a lesser danger, or a higher ideal, than the Franco government. Go to it, with all your might and main! But you have no right to do so until you have covered the news—and that you are not doing. And if you ask for really stronger proof for that statement than the handful of facts, and the more important leads, which I have brought together in this letter, I think I can oblige you. It's up to you. I shall do my honest best to get and give you—and the American public—the facts on this vital question. This paper will send to Spain one of the most experienced American correspondents who have served our press from Spain. He served it faithfully, and impartially, for years. He was then forced out of Spain by threats of death at the hands of the Red government of Valencia and Madrid. He backs up all I have said in this letter. He will go back to Spain and cover this great question for THE COMMONWEAL: whose duty it is to do all it can to keep America safe from any form of Communist or Fascist domination or control. That the greater forces of our American press also desire this, I am convinced. But it is being deceived at present by its own representatives in Spain.

Such is my case, which, for the present, I rest at this point. But I have more and even stronger evidence to support that case, which in due course I shall lay before you, believing that you are concerned to get at the truth about this situation, the right handling of which is vitally important for American democracy.

FITTING IN

By FRANK THONE

"GIVE the country back to the Indians?" Secretary Wallace looked up from under bushy eyebrows quizzically at his interlocutor. "Well, seems to me we'd have a lot of work to do first, making it fit to give back to them!"

Almost hourly reports were giving bitter point and emphasis to his somewhat wry-faced jest. Ruinous midwinter floods, laying great cities waste. Three hundred million tons of topsoil gone from farms of the upper watershed of the Ohio, changed from wealth to waste by the evil alchemy of the same storm period. Renewed drought in the Southwest, with the dust-storm devil astir again in the dreaded Dust Bowl. Starved sharecroppers and mortgage-hounded landowners bickering acridly among the eroded clay hills of the South. Trouble all over the map.

The tale of our national woes, in this or any other of our recent troublous years, receives ironic heightening from the reflection that, like many of our other national accomplishments we have more reason to be proud of, we have made most of them ourselves. We have thrust our great cities in the paths of inevitable floods. We have laid fertile lands naked to the eroding rains. We have stripped the dust-holding grass cover from the plains, with plow, with trampling cattle, with nibbling mouths of sheep. We have demanded of our poorer lands more than the traffic will bear, and thereby enforced a soil-mining type of agriculture that ends in poverty for field and tiller.

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As a people we deserve admonition for our neglect and abuse of the amazing natural abundance that was in this land when we first came into possession of it. The endless forests that awed the pioneers, flocks of wildfowl that darkened the sky, herds of bison covering the plain, grass on the prairies high as a tall man's head—tales of a vanished wonderland to the present generation, yet ours by word of mouth of our own immediate elders. All this was ours, and might have remained ours; but now we are appalled to see how near we have come to destroying it altogether.

Exhorters and prophets have not been lacking: militant Jeremiah-voices of the earlier conservation school of Pinchot and Roosevelt I; in these later days the quieter but still grave-spoken Isaiahs of ecology. Those warned us of the wrath to come (and it has come!); these bade us look up, for "behold, now is the acceptable time." We are even beginning to pay some attention to these voices—though we still have a tendency to shy off when heeding them might involve a little expenditure of public moneys.

Yet even ecologists have still some way to go before they arrive at the perfection of their gospel. At present a great many of them—most of them, perhaps—have a rather uncomfortable gospel of perfection, which would regard the landscape as ideally organized only if there were no people in it at all. All other organisms, from rotifers to redwoods, are natural and necessary parts of the picture. But man, with all his works, is poison. There is a reason for this. Ecologists are not congenital misanthropes. They have only learned through unvarying experience that man means "mess," wherever they find him. He is a disruptive, destructive factor in a living complex that otherwise fits together like the harmonizing stones in a mosaic. He is the organism that disorganizes. So even in long-peopled Europe ecologists climb mountains, wade marshes, tramp out on lonely heaths and dunelands—anywhere to find biota that know not man.

One exception, however, ecologists make in their anthropophobia; as natural and unconscious, in most cases, as is their instinctive shunning of their own kind. Primitive man "doesn't count"; a landscape that includes Athapascan Indians or Australian Blacks is still "natural." These people are as much a part of the ecology of the lands they inhabit as are birch-tree and beaver, wattle and wallaby. They are organically integrated. True, they must kill that they may eat, as do all other animals; but they do not destroy merely to enrich themselves—at least, not until civilized man shows them how. Even then, they usually do not learn the lesson well, but themselves become victims of the exploitation and destruction rather than accomplices therein.

No revival of the "noble savage" myth is here attempted or intended. Modern research in anthropology and archeology has pretty well pricked that iridiscent eighteenth-century bubble. Savages have hard lives, with frequent famine, much suffering from cold and storm, plenty of diseases which they do not know how to avoid or treat. As a rule they die young. But even in all this, they are more like the lower animals and thus by their very sufferings and weaknesses fit the more closely into the general ecological set-up of the regions they inhabit.

One thing certainly they do not do. Partly because they lack the tools and technique, partly (in many cases) because they are inhibited by tabus, they do not oppose themselves destructively to the forces of nature. They do not, for example, build dikes and levees for floods to burst. Although they may practise a well-developed agriculture, as did the Indians of most of what is now the United States, they do not strip sloping soil and leave it exposed to erosion. They do not kill more game than they can use. (They even ask pardon from bear or caribou before they shoot!) "Children of nature," they are called. Well, at least they greatly respected their mother.

But what can we learn from savages? Our ancestors were presumably Neolithic savages, but we've got away from such things, and have a right to be glad of it. Would you turn the clock back ten thousand years? It isn't necessary to go all the way with the savage. But where he shows better sense than we, too much pride should not hinder us from taking lessons from him. The basic business of fitting oneself into the landscape, of becoming organically integrated with it, is something we might profitably study.

To be sure, we do not need to immerse ourselves in our environment so completely as the savage. We can modify environment to some extent, as the "dry dams" of Ohio triumphantly demonstrated during the terrible winter floods. But we must not think that we can fight nature to the very last ditch, just because we belong to a race that has made a god of its own will. We do not need to corset the Mississippi in high walls that press upon the very rim of its channel. We do not need to plow land in the West that will yield us nothing but dust, six years out of seven. We do not need to strip the hillsides of trees and then plow the slopes into a gaunt yellow corpse of a landscape. The savages could spare these lands, and were in turn spared at least the "civilized" miseries we have invited upon our heads.

True, we need more land than the Indians used, and we need to exploit it more intensively, for there are many more of us than there were of them. But the Indians left unused vast areas they could have safely used even in their simple economy; these we have opened up, and a great part of

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them we can still retain, if we will only farm and pasture them sensibly. Moreover, we have crops and methods of cropping that will vastly outyield anything that the primitive hoe-farming Indians could ever have dreamed of. We can well afford to surrender wider bottomlands to the river, to put trees and brush on slopes, to bind down dust-blown lands with the millionfold root-cords of permanent grass. Though these restored buffer lands will admittedly yield only a fraction of what they might in wheat or corn (for a few lucky years, and until erosion by wind or water sets in), they will pay for themselves many times over in the security they will give to the prime plowlands.

Furthermore, they will yield something that our grandsires knew abundantly, that our fathers knew diminishingly, that we hardly know at all—wild life in really worth-while quantities. Many of us are willing to emulate the savage who hunted for necessity, in a perhaps atavistic relish of hunting for sport. Others are willing to tramp the brush without a gun, stalking our game with a camera, or even simply an appreciative eye. However armed we go, whether into the huge sanctuaries and hunting grounds that federal and state governments may establish or for a brief stroll in the smaller, more intimate coverts on our own or a permissive neighbor's land, we shall have a satisfying sense that has long been absent from our racial consciousness, of fitting as natural living units into a newer living landscape.

By making the country fit to give back to the Indians, by turning at least the marginal parts of it back into the kind of land the Indians could have understood and appreciated, we shall be making it the more fit to possess for ourselves—and to share as natural partners with the animals and plants that will inhabit it.

THE SPAIN THAT HAD NO EASTER

By E. ALLISON PEERS

OVER something like one-third of the territory of "the most Catholic country in Europe" there was no outward celebration, this year, of Holy Week or Easter. About 8,000,000 people inhabit that territory, practically all of them baptized and brought up as Catholics. And those of them who have remained faithful to the Church have no church to go to. If a group should meet clandestinely and a priest should say Mass for them, both priest and people are in imminent peril of their lives. Nay, more: not only are some of their churches burned, many of them damaged, and all of them closed to worshipers, but most of those who in normal times would be frequenting those churches have burned their books of devotion and buried medals and crucifixes, lest their houses should be searched and the possession of such articles should cause them to be imprisoned, murdered or executed after summary trial, as "Fascists."

A pagan Spain: a Spain without its *Semana Santa*—one who in the last twenty years has spent thirteen Easters in the Peninsula can hardly imagine it. To the non-appearance of the flags on Madrid's government buildings one had become accustomed during the years of the republic, but it would be hard to accustom oneself to the absence of crowds visiting the *Monumentos* on Maundy Thursday were Madrid wearing its usual carefree aspect. In Barcelona—a visitor would think he had mistaken the season. No palms for sale on the stalls erected down the center of the long Ramblas? No majestic procession of palms around that magnificent church of fourteenth-century Gothic, now a tragic victim of mob passion—Santa Maria del Mar? No silent watch during the hours of the *duelo* on Good Friday in the great, dark cathedral? From Montserrat, the Black Virgin has departed; and, for the first time in centuries, the sole visitors to her shrine in the mountains will be the curious, not the faithful. Gay Valencia, deserted by winter in mid-February and from whose churches the Easter bells seem always to ring out more merrily than from any others, is silent as the grave; and here, as elsewhere in Red Spain, the faithful, who can keep Easter only in their hearts, are mourning with inward anguish their martyred dead.

It is ineffably sad. And the sadness is hardly dispelled by the thought that in two-thirds of Spain—in "redeemed" Spain—there is freedom of worship, and the Church (to quote General Franco), "with her saints and her martyrs, with her age-old institutions, her social justice, her Christian charity and her great comprehensive spirit," is in her own sphere supreme. It is something that from unscathed Santiago in the north to tortured Malaga in the south, through the uplands of Leon and Castile, in Salamanca, Burgos and Toledo (cities that were greatest when Spain was greatest), and above all in royal Cordoba, Granada and Seville, Spain should be at one with the rest of Catholic Europe. But, however thronged the Sevilian churches, however solemn the long street processions of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, however charged with emotion the *saetas* that cleave the air, there can be no

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peace in the Spain that "has never ceased to be Catholic and never will" for so long as one-third of the country is held by the enemies of religion.

For that it is religious in every form known to them, that the Reds are persecuting, no one who has followed the history of Spain during the last few years with knowledge and understanding can possibly doubt. I am aware that the group of churchmen who visited two cities of Spain last winter "found no evidence of an organized 'God-less' propaganda," and "were unable, on inquiry, to hear of any caricatures of God, of Christ, or of the Virgin and Saints." There is much that could be said about this, but the most obvious thing is that they could not have looked very far. Even the respectable caricaturist, Bagaria, whose former newspaper was so moderate in its Republicanism that its enemies among the Left extremists used to say it had been bought by the Jesuits, has begun to amuse himself, in the Barcelona *Vanguardia*, by representing God the Father in a way as humorless as it is irreverent. As for the articles and caricatures in the extremist papers, there is enough of the anti-God movement in them to fill a volume. During the last two decades, I have seen anticlericalism develop from an idiosyncrasy into a tendency, and from a tendency into a movement. I have seen the anticlerical movement widen its scope and grow into an anti-God movement, in which, it is true, anticlericalism is still the most conspicuous feature, but is clearly recognizable (if I may quote the title of a most revealing article recently published in *Solidaridad Obrera*, and referred to in the *Universe*) as the mask which hides the anti-God face. If the Reds should win, the mask will surely and immediately be removed and the evolution of the anti-God movement will be complete.

Some Spanish Catholics, we are told, defend the régime in this Easterless Spain, including a very few who are not resident in it and can therefore speak their minds freely. They seem to rely mainly on intellectual and philosophical arguments. I am not a philosopher, and I hope that I shall never be called an intellectual. But in so far as they find difficulty in justifying the rebellion of last July, I can understand and sympathize with them. Will some of them, at least, not agree that the very fact that they have taken the side of the Valencia government as a matter of principle makes it the more incumbent upon them to denounce the unconstitutional, unjust and iniquitous acts which have stained the record of that government? Such a course would not win them popularity, but among all thinking people it would bring them respect.

The most unhappy example, however, has been set by persons in England who ought to have nothing but sympathy with the Church in Spain and yet have withheld such sympathy from her or have even chosen this tragic moment to attack her. Unfortunately, they speak without personal knowledge, and among them are those whose positions lead them quite undeservedly to be considered as authorities. One such, an Anglican prelate who, in my hearing, had publicly attacked the Church in Spain, I challenged to produce any evidence in support of his assertions. He replied that he could quote no references, but had formed his impressions from "persons with a right to speak." Their names were not given.

An even more lamentable example has been provided by the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar, who, with an uncharitableness which one would hardly have credited, declares in an article (*Church Times*, February 26, 1937) that "the Roman Catholic Church in Spain has failed, and failed lamentably, to present Christianity faithfully to the nation." Once again I challenged the critic to "tell us where and how he has acquired the abundance of evidence which alone could justify so damaging a generalization. Has he studied the presentation of Christianity in Spain . . . or does he rely upon information picked up at second-hand or third-hand on his travels?" Once again, the question was left unanswered.

Fortunately, as well as those who speak from ignorance, there are those who testify from knowledge. As I think of all that the Church in Spain has done for me, I cannot, however little it may need my poor defense, allow it to be attacked without protest. From it I have learned what heights can be reached by fervor, devotion and sacrifice: the very lessons of Holy Week. It is credited by its enemies with being overpowerful and overrich. But its true power and its true riches are of the kind that no man can take from it: the millions who worship with an intensity and a regularity hard to parallel, and the thousands who live saintly lives of contemplation. May its trial soon be over and may a government arise in Spain that will give liberty of worship to all!

To Hilaire Belloc

Soldier of France and/or John Bull's bad boy
You never knew (why should you?) long ago
How many, by contagion of your joy,
Took suit and service with you. It was so.
They smelled your horse and leather, heard you swear
Hilarious, and jingle by. Your men
Joined up for the duration (*c'est la guerre!*),
Sharpshooters in the army of the pen.

Tonight, when we had talked, I had a thought:
I took a little book of yours I had
And held it where the April moonlight caught
And freshened pages where you once had sung.
Remember, when you're old and tired and sad,
Who put his youth in verse, is always young.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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REGARDS TO FATHER HANNON

By JOHN GIBBONS

I AM PRESUPPOSING, of course, that there really is such a priest and that he is not merely a local saying or some sort of a national monument. Also that he spells his name like that and not as "Hannan" or "Hannen." For I have never seen it in print and I have not set eyes on my Father Hannon; and now that I come to think of it I have not set eyes either on the Great Pyramid. And yet I believe that it exists. Perhaps there is a Father Hannon.

I first heard the name of mystery on the side of a road near Suweileh, which is a Circassian village in Transjordania in Asia Minor. (Yes, I am aware that it is all very complicated.) The Suweileh-ians are people who cleared out of the Russian Caucasus after the Turkish War of 1877; they are really Mohammedan Cossacks, and were probably after the war not too happy under the old Orthodox Russia. Anyway a few tribes of them crossed the frontier into the Turkish Empire and drifted down into what is now Transjordania. They are on the whole of comparatively little use as stenographers or accountants but are very good indeed at turning over under the stomachs of horses at full gallop and then firing off a few rifles or revolvers, naturally like prudent men carrying a sword or two between their teeth for reserve; they are mostly enlisted in the Arab Legion of the Emir Abdullah of Transjordania, where they lead happy and useful lives in shooting at Bedouin sneak-thieves who have stolen camels or anything. They are a sort of police, but if all camels happen by any miracle to be present and correct then the Circassians have to think up something else; they go all broody and introspective if not allowed to shoot at somebody. Otherwise all I really know about them is that they are supposed to have the most beautiful wives in the world, only cleverly disguised to the outsider as shapeless bundles of black rags, that they wear queer fur hats under a tropical sun, and that they stare very fiercely indeed at passing English travel-authors.

That is an odd country all round, and really the best that I can honestly say about Transjordania is that I prefer it to Palestine; or at least to Palestine in what the heavily censored English newspapers were told to call "strike time." Personally I should have called it war-time. We had to dynamite half the city of Jaffa, you know, and our "police" were wearing steel helmets and were carrying rifles and machine-guns. Even I myself was slightly involved in the general unpleasantness. It is my custom to wear a European hat instead of a fez, and that made them mistake me for a Hebrew in Akka, and actually I believe that I set up a new world's running record: literary gentlemen over fifty, third palm-tree on the left past the Akka Mosque and straight into the Palestinian Police Barracks. I spent the rest of the day there with the deluded mob outside steadily stoning the place, though fortunately it was not entirely a wasted day; I had served four years in the British Army and had learned to play cards and was lucky enough to find some Palestinian constables who apparently hadn't, and by the time that I could be got out in an armed lorry I was at least thirty cents to the good. But it was quite an interesting time in Holy Palestine. Practically all traffic was stopped, and if one train a day was running there it would have a light-engine ahead just to see if the track was dynamited. There were no buses, and from Jerusalem in Palestine to Amman in Transjordania your only chance of transport was to bribe a seat in the once-a-day military-escorted post-car; if you did not object to the chance of the road being blown up, you could crowd in with the soldiers and with anybody else going and could take the little ride. About four hours it will take you, and you will find it quite a warmish four hours. From Jerusalem to the Dead Sea is a 4,000 feet drop, and by the time that you come to Jericho you might just as well be sitting in a traveling oven.

But once across Jordan Bridge it changes. There are no Hebrew Zionists in Transjordania, and hence the Arabs are not so anxious to shoot at a car or to throw home-made bombs; we dropped the escort and there was something like room to breathe. As we climbed out of the Jordan Valley and up the Mountains of Moab it grew a trifle less stifling. The roads too are all different. Transjordania is at least semi-independent; it is not drawing on the British taxpayer and there are no Zionists pouring in Hebrew money from the great cities of the States. Any civilization that Tranjordania wants, it must pay for out of its own pocket; and as it hasn't got much of a pocket its roads are not up to much. Here you see a military lorry that has come over the edge of a precipice, or there an ancient Turkish cannon that must have been first broken-down in 1917. They are not, either, too enthusiastic on civilization, and whereas in Palestine arms are at least officially forbidden, here over the Jordan every man carries his rifle and a bandolier of cartridges. In fact with no rifle I was feeling almost a little conspicuous in that country; not that there seemed anybody much to notice me.

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That is a land of terrifying desolations, and you can travel for miles and see literally nobody. Actually where the mail-car broke down near Suweileh we might as well have been in the middle of the Sahara plus a few hundred square miles of stones and plus some things that looked to me like wolves but which they said were dogs. "They said," I put it in my literary way, but really there was only one man in that car who could talk to me at all, and he couldn't either. He was an educated Arab who had probably been to the University in Cairo (Egypt) but it would be French that he would learn there; his scrap of English was pretty poor. I know that he was trying to tell me about a place called Es Salt that we were apparently going to pass, and I fancy it is one of the world's oldest towns; but really I didn't understand three-quarters of what he said. But of course I told him that I was most interested, and it was then that he said something about *"Regards to Father Hannon";* but I couldn't go on talking, and I just smiled affably. Talking is very hard work when you can't understand what the other man says, and with all that excitement of the drive and the terrific sun and then having my mouth like a furnace with thirst I was really wishing that the Arab driver could get the car to go again, and just then he did get it to go.

Amman is another place, I suppose, that was really wasted on me. I read it up afterward, and it is of unexampled historic interest and was the Rabbath-Ammon of the Bible with some Greek and Roman cities built on top of it. But honestly all I was thinking about was the hotel, and I was wondering whether there would be any washing water in it and if there would be anything to drink besides *arrak;* I had been to Arab hotels before. But actually Amman has a very admirable hotel, a sort of literal oasis in the wilderness, and not only has it real bath-rooms but it also keeps English beer and Scotch whisky and even American Gideon Bibles; and I suppose the Philadelphia (that's what they call it, and Amman turned into the Philadelphia of the Greeks or Romans or somebody) comes in international hotel-lists. But anyway there is a Gideon Bible in each bed-room, and it is kept carefully dusted by the Arab staff.

I suppose the hotel pays; after all, Amman is a capital with an emir, and he will have distinguished visitors, and there is, too, always a small British garrison. Transjordania comes in books as an independent country, but there are British high officials there to advise the emir how to be a proper emir. He has his own army, but they are on horses or camels; we British very generously provide the air force, and we keep a squadron encamped on a hill just above the royal palace in case of any advice being wanted in a hurry. I saw an old English map hanging up in that hotel, and it would be what we British in our modest way call "Intelligence": "Mountain country unfit for tanks," or "Rolling hills just possible for machine-gun lorries"; it was that sort of a map. This was the Colonel Lawrence country, you know, the famous "Lawrence of Arabia" man; and actually if you try to travel on the Hedjaz Railway you will have the satisfaction of feeling that the part that you can't travel on because the bridges are missing was at least blown up by Colonel Lawrence. We are not at the moment blowing up any railroads, but we are still there. I saw an obvious British officer drinking beer with gloomy severity in the hotel bar, presumably before going upstairs to read his Gideon Bible.

Next day I went out to inspect Amman, and watched a camel with all the melancholy fatalism of the unchanging East simply ignoring a Western traffic signal which didn't work and plunging into the maelstrom of Amman's main lane and meeting another camel and two donkeys. I also climbed a very steep mountain and nearly got apoplexy under that sun staring at a ruined Turkish fortress by mistake, and really I ought to have climbed some other mountain and then it would have been a Greek temple or something. But anyway it was very hot, and I was glad to get back to the hotel again. It was busy now with scores of people there, and apparently the proprietor's family had had a wedding; all their friends were there, and any odd guest was welcome to join in. Before I knew where I was, the Arab manager had set me at a table terrace and was introducing me in bad English to an elderly Arab priest.

All Arabs are not Mohammedans, you know; this was a Christian Arab family, and Catholic at that. "Latins," they call us out there. "Catholic" means a member of an Eastern Church in communion with Rome; like a Maronite. But it was rather awkward with that priest; he only knew a very few words of English, and about all the Arabic I have is *arrak* which is a particularly poisonous sort of practically neat alcohol, and *mar-salaam* which means "good-bye," and *imshi* which means "go away"; and none of them are suitable phrases for a priest who has just performed the marriage ceremony for his leading parishioners. There we just sat, smiling unhappily at each other. I was quite relieved for that priest when somebody else had to be introduced to him and he could get away at last. He shook hands warmly with me several times over, and then visibly concentrated on a scrap of English. *"Regards,"* he said, *"to Father Hannon."*

When I came down to breakfast next morning there was an obvious Englishman and his wife at the next table to mine, and as I bowed slightly when passing the lady she asked if I would not prefer to breakfast with them, and then ordered the waiter in Arabic to move my place. I should

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not as a stranger understand, she said, but it was absolutely impossible to train the natives to make proper tea; she had been trying for years, but now she always made her own tea at the table. I had better breakfast with them. I was pleased, then, that my new drill suit looked socially presentable, not having before been quite sure about it. It had been my wife back in London who had first cast the seed of doubt into my mind. "As used for lion-hunting," I had jocularly remarked on trying on my suit; and she had said that the obvious idea was to so paralyze the lion with laughter as to render him an easy prey. And here out in Transjordania I was wearing my suit and was sitting as the guest of a British official and his wife, and the lady was telling the waiter all the proper things to bring me to eat.

She knew the language, and she knew that country like her hand. Driving back to Jerusalem, she was. No, of course she didn't want any military escort. Yes, she had heard that the Arabs had been stoning cars at Jericho, and that the Greek priest there was supposed to have been killed. She was quite different, though. If she did meet any mob of natives, she would simply tell them to go home at once; and of course they would go. The natives were quite all right, except of course that they could simply not be taught to make decent tea. Father Hannon was perfectly simple. The Arab in the car and the priest at the hotel would have assumed that I was interested in archeology, and that I should be going on the Petra like nearly all the other tourists, when there were any. It's the City of the Rose-Red Ruins, and it is a two-day drive across the desert from Amman. No, the real desert; I hadn't seen any desert yet. The road by Suweileh was their best road, the most up-to-date of Transjordania. But the road to Petra I should find really desert. You put up for the night at El Kerak, it seems; that is a really Arab city. Not like Amman. No hotel at all; any stray European would naturally put up with the Catholic priest. She and her husband knew Father Hannon quite well; in fact in the course of her husband's official duties they might even see him as often as once a year. Her *regards to Father Hannon,* if I was going that way. And it occurred to me that this Father Hannon's life seemed one long round of social gaiety.

Actually I wasn't going that way; I meant to go north to El Deráa and Syria and Damascus. But before I left Amman I meant to try for an interview with the Emir Abdullah. After all we should have much in common; we were both born in 1882, I near the Crystal Palace in London which is a famous place to English, and the Emir at Mecca which is a famous place to Arabs. And anyway I ought to be able to sell the interview for a few dollars to some London paper. And I went and looked at His Highness's body-guard, Circassians in very splendid uniforms only with a nasty trick of standing like Napoleon with the right hand tucked into the left breast of the tunic; and if you raised your own hand too suddenly anywhere near that Emir I have a strong suspicion that those Circassians would prove to be holding revolvers. And I put in my credentials to the hotel manager to be passed to Prince Djemal for consideration; that's the sort of Prime Minister, and I hope that he could read my credentials. I personally couldn't, as they were in Arabic.

That meant, of course, an extra night to stop in Amman; and as in the evening I was sitting on the terrace outside the hotel that Jerusalem mail-car drove up and out stepped first a long man in drills and a topee and then a lady. She did not look too happy a lady, and her face was purple and she was swaying with the heat and glare; I was wondering how many soldiers they had had with them in the car, and how long the customs had taken at the Jordan Bridge frontier. It is really warmish there, and even the Arabs at Jericho in a few generations go almost as black as Negroes; it is the sun doing something to the pigments of their skin. There as the lady stood dazzled and dazed with the blindness of that sun, the hotel dog flew at her in welcoming greeting; he is a good dog and is really as tame as a kitten, and the Philadelphia hotel's Arab manager's children pull him about by his tail. It is the grief of his life that he is perpetually being misunderstood by strangers, merely through his misfortune of having the stature and appearance of an extra-fierce wolf. From the terrace I heard that girl's little gasp of horror. Then as the beast reached her she put out her hand and patted its huge head. English or American, I was wondering! Rightly or wrongly, I did not believe that a woman of any other nation could do that trick.

Actually they were Americans; and what is more they were the very best sort of Americans. I know, because after dinner that night I made friends with them. Not once did they grumble at the Arab waiters for not having some special sort of waffles or demand American food. (Yes, I know we want tea; but then we're different; we're English.) And not once did those people call the country either "bum" or "lousy," or wonder what they had come for. Indeed, they knew exactly what they had come for. That gentleman was an American archeologist from New York, and I have since heard from him from there; and his wife was traveling with him on a long-coveted tour through the Near East. Petra, the Rose-Red City, and its ruins was where they were off the next day after the lady had rested.

"My kind regards, please," I said, "my very kindest *regards to Father Hannon.*" But I do wish I knew how that priest spelled his name.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—The anniversary of Leo XIII's encyclical, "Rerum Novarum," and Pius XI's "Quadragesimo Anno" will be marked by a number of nation-wide broadcasts and special articles in the Catholic press. Reverend R. A. McGowan, Assistant Director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, will speak over the Catholic Hour on "Society and the Social Encyclicals," May 9, 16 and 23 at 6 p. m. Eastern Daylight Saving Time. * * * The first six pamphlets of the Social Action Series have been issued by the N.C.W.C. The titles are: "New Guilds: A Conversation"; "Rugged Individualism"; "The Wages and Hours of American Labor"; "The American Labor Movement"; "What Laws Must We Have?"; "Consumers' Cooperatives." Six more are soon to be released and a numbers of others are in preparation. * * * Archbishop Justin D. Simonds of Hobart is the first Australian-born priest to be appointed archbishop; there are ten native-born Australian bishops. The 1937 Australian Catholic Directory fixes the Catholic population of the continent at 1,252,998. * * * Bishop John Mark Gannon of Erie, Pa., has broken ground for a new school for underprivileged girls which will be in charge of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity. * * * The citizens of Strasbourg, Alsace, are already at work on plans for celebration in 1939 of the 500th anniversary of the completion of their cathedral tower, at the time the highest in Christendom. * * * A recent marriage in St. Simons Catholic Chapel was the first solemnized on St. Simons Island off the coast of Georgia for 252 years. * * * The Liturgical Apostolate of 17 Red Lion Passage, Holborn, London, W.C.1, England, has announced a 656-page Child's Daily Missal, edited by Dom Gaspar Lefebvre, O.S.B., and Elisabeth van Dewyck, with 300 illustrations by René De Cramer. The missal's supplement contains the Proper for all the dioceses of Ireland, Great Britain and the United States. * * * The April *Queen's Work* of St. Louis, Mo., contains an impassioned article by a Catholic convict who calls for the supplying of prisoners with Catholic literature.

The Nation.—Appeals for economy in the House did not prevent that body from passing a bill which would launch the government on a ten-year program of aid to states, municipalities and industries for control of water pollution. The bill would authorize a $1,000,000 annual expenditure. * * * The Agriculture Department disappointedly admitted abandonment of extended plans for virtual revival of the invalidated AAA, due to the President's economy message. The plans projected a system of commodity loans, surplus storage and production control. * * * The American Newspaper Publishers Association, in convention in New York City, moved to promote development of a newsprint industry in the South. The action was provoked by a new high in Canadian paper cost announced for 1938, a 25 percent rise within three years. The association elected its youngest president, James G. Stahlman, publisher of the Nashville *Banner*. * * * President and Mrs. Roosevelt attended the funeral of W. Forbes Morgan, former treasurer of the Democratic National Committee, who died while testifying before the Ohio Legislature. * * * Federal appropriation for agriculture, shaved off $5,000,000 less than budget estimates, was passed by the House. A 219 to 32 vote killed a proposal to reduce by 10 percent every item in the measure. * * * The Business Advisory Council, it was learned, has had before the President for several weeks a report urging authorization of the Bureau of the Census to make an immediate survey of unemployment. * * * In new spring floods, Pittsburgh and Washington, D. C., were threatened by rising rivers. * * * The President signed the new Guffey-Vinson coal bill, setting up a "little NRA" for the bituminous industry. He sent for confirmation to the Senate the names of seven appointed for the Coal Commission provided for in the bill. * * * The Supreme Court has agreed to review during its present term all constitutional questions affecting the Social Security Act. * * * President Roosevelt left Washington for eleven days' fishing off the Texas coast. He went by train to Biloxi, Miss., and planned to go from there to New Orleans, from which port the yacht Potomac will take him to the Gulf waters.

The Wide World.—News from the Spanish front included virtually no information concerning the progress of the international patrol. Great Britain dispatched a huge cruiser to protect merchantmen conveying food supplies to Bilbao as long as they remained outside the three-mile limit. A number of vessels then ran the blockade. Fighting was heavy on three fronts. Leftist forces still bottled up their foes in Madrid suburbs, but suffered instead from the most intensive bombardment to which central Madrid has been subjected. A newly appointed mayor of the city strove to evacuate the civilian population after numerous casualties. In the Basque provinces, armies commanded by General Mola were converging on Durango, generally regarded as the gateway to Bilbao. Rumors of a Basque capitulation were widespread. There was an obvious dearth of foodstuffs. On the other hand, General Miaja had pushed an army to within three miles of Toledo. The whole of Spain was slowly becoming a battlefield. * * * The House of Commons debated the budget, drawing from Neville Chamberlain the statement that Great Britain would discuss war debts or a world economic parley only when "circumstances are such as to warrant the hope that satisfactory results might be reached." * * * In Germany the perils of minorities increased, although there was some disposition to lessen pressure on the Confessional Protestant groups. A number of bishops protested against the attacks on the Catholic

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educational system; and the Bishop of Trier issued a statement declaring that the election returns in the Saar region, where a majority of parents were said to have voted for secularist schools, were not to be trusted. Leaders of B'nai B'rith were arrested, and the organization (previously entrusted with the administration of Jewish charities) was at least temporarily dissolved. * * * Rumors that a military alliance between Germany and Italy might be arrived at persisted as talks between Mussolini and Goering were resumed, ostensibly for the immediate purpose of arriving at a joint statement concerning the Spanish war. The meeting was almost contemporaneous with the signing of an Anglo-French note guaranteeing the independence of Belgium and pledging mutual aid in case of "unprovoked aggression." This declaration, the most important of the post-League treaties, was signed in Paris on April 24. * * * Poland made a definitive step toward totalitarianism when the National party, being organized in accordance with a declaration on February 21, announced the major tenets of its program. The party is to be Christian, and will therefore refuse admission to virtually all the 3,000,000 Jews who reside within the country. Some exceptions are to be made for "especially meritorious service."

* * * *

More Strikes.—If anything the number of strikes increased during the week. The walkout called by the United Shoe Workers of America, C.I.O. affiliate, in the twin cities of Auburn and Lewiston, Me., reached a crisis, when a state Supreme Court judge issued an injunction against the strikers. The governor called out the National Guard who patrolled the troubled areas with fixed bayonets; the populace as a whole remained calm. After a week of arrests and idle threats to close the C.I.O. commissary for needy strikers, the first conference of the strike was held. At Stockton, Calif., when strikers armed with baseball bats, clubs and rocks rushed a truck loaded with spinach and an undetermined number of workers in an attempt to reopen a cannery factory shut down by an A. F. of L. affiliate strike involving 1,300 workers, they were met by a barrage of tear gas and buckshot; 63 were injured in this battle of Waterloo Road. Two days later a move by the State Federation of Labor to separate organizations of agricultural and cannery workers seemed to promise a settlement. The International Longshoremen's Association, an A. F. of L. affiliate, went on a two-day strike against the Cundard-White Star and Furness-Withy in New York to settle a union dispute in Montreal. A more serious A. F. of L. strike of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees involving 25,000 workers on eleven railroads in Greater New York was averted by the mediation of President Roosevelt, who appointed an emergency board to consider their demands of recognition, higher pay, vacations with pay and the end of the contract system. Under the Railway Labor Act no strike is allowed for sixty days. Rumblings in the Ford labor dispute continued with a sit-down strike at Richmond, Calif., settled with the awarding of seniority rights and ending of discrimination for union activity. At the twenty-fifth annual meeting of the United States Chamber of Commerce, April 27, business leaders began a drive to amend the Wagner Labor Relations Act. During the week a Senate Civil Liberties Committee heard testimony of the flagrant terrorism used to prevent the organization of miners in Harlan County, Ky.

The Court.—Four weeks of public committee hearings on the President's Supreme Court reorganization plan ended, April 23, with the prediction that the Senate Judiciary Committee of 14 Democrats, 3 Republicans and Senator Norris of Nebraska would split evenly on the question. House leaders were somewhat startled to receive peremptory White House orders, April 26, to pigeonhole the Miller-Tydings price-agreement bill and the intimation that no more legislative measures on labor and industry were to be acted upon until the Supreme Court reorganization had been settled. Senate Judiciary Committee meetings reopened, April 27. The final vote was set for May 18; an adverse ten to eight vote was expected. In the face of the President's determination to see his plan through, various civic and patriotic organizations continued to meet to discuss the question. The plan received its greatest setback in popular favor when a zealous Kansas Rooseveltian expunged from a newsreel Senator Wheeler's remarks to the effect that despite his loss of Montana patronage since his leadership of opposition to the plan, "I say to you and to Mr. Farley, to everybody else, that I will vote against this proposition because it is morally wrong; it is morally unsound; it is a dangerous proceeding." The deletion was hastily restored but the damage had been done. Meanwhile the Supreme Court proceeded to bring to a conclusion a *cause célèbre* which ranks with the Mooney and Scottsboro cases when it ruled by the familiar five to four lineup that the Negro Communist, Angelo Herndon, was free. Majority opinion held that the eighteen to twenty year sentence of the Georgia courts on the basis of an anti-carpetbagger law forbidding incitement to forceful resistance to state authority was an infringement of the 14th Amendment, which guarantees free speech. The character of Herndon's campaign for freedom may be gaged from the title of his autobiography, "Let Me Live"; he had been arrested and convicted on the grounds of having Communist literature in his possession.

The Fate of Austria.—On April 23, Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg concluded two days of conferences with Mussolini that led to a joint communiqué hardly concealing the grave difficulties through which the Austrian statesman is laboriously trying to guide his country. Before arriving in Venice, Dr. Schuschnigg stated what the government press had emphasized for some days previous —that Austria would not be drawn into a military alliance of states, and would above all refuse to adopt a position hostile to Czechoslovakia. A definite effort not to ignore the possibilities of friendship with states in the sphere of French influence had been noted in the Austrian press for some time. Mussolini, for his part, insisted that

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German influence must have its share in any settlement of Danubian problems. The communiqué referred in no way to the independence of Austria, and also avoided mention of the "Roman protocols" which long ago sought to establish a pro-Italian block of states. Furthermore, Fascist newspapers made no secret of their annoyance with Dr. Schuschnigg's stand. All this was not taken to mean that Il Duce's government would look with favor upon a German move to gobble up Austria. Doubtless Mussolini feels able to stave off this danger by making diplomatic overtures to Hitler, and seeks to prevent what he considers an equally undesirable development—the restoration of the Hapsburgs, with a possible aftermath of trade and military alliances between the former imperial states. The majority of correspondents believed that Dr. Schuschnigg would be compelled by the turn events have taken to include strong Nazi sympathizers in his Cabinet. At any rate, the road ahead would seem to call for very judicious maneuvering, with more appeal to "western democratic" sympathies.

Father Divine.—"Father" Major J. Divine, whose "heaven" at 20 West 115th Street, New York, has been the scene of evangelistic festivals without equal, was arrested in Milford, Conn., on April 22. When discovered by the police, the man to whom thousands of Harlem Negroes have vaguely referred as "God" was hiding in the cellar of a Connecticut "heaven"; but he came along peacefully and answered charges of being in part responsible for the stabbing of a white "seeker after peace." For a number of years "Father" Divine's banquets and revivals have enjoyed a reputation equaled only by the more lurid night clubs. Persons interested in strange human phenomena derived almost as much pleasure from witnessing the manifestations at 20 West 115th Street as from seeing a play or a football game. To the bands of faithful Negroes he was, however, a symbol of Divine power. The ramifications of the financial measures adopted to keep a vast community (with its restaurants, lodging-houses, farms, etc.) going have not yet been explored. It is believed, however, that the chief source of revenue was the confidence of followers who turned over their earnings and got in return whatever was needful, together with a good deal of spiritualistic stimulation. Quite suddenly, however, the empire began to totter. A white lieutenant was charged with a moral offense; and soon thereafter an assistant, Faithful Mary, broke with Divine and accused him of variegated lapses. Charges that the "heaven" employed child labor were made by the police. Next there occurred serious riots when process servers were attacked by angry mobs of partizans. Protestant Negro leaders did not conceal their satisfaction at the turn of events. Accustomed latterly to the seemingly unlimited popularity of "Father" Divine, they looked upon the mounting difficulties as indicating a return to sanity. Some aspects of the "kingdom" may have been borrowed from Catholic practise—i. e., the custom of giving scriptural names to the "sisters." On the whole, however, the evangelist's doctrine remained singularly devoid of intellectual or doctrinal content.

Student Peace Demonstrations. — College students throughout the country participated in the fourth annual "peace strike" in a planned nation-wide demonstration against war. One million youths in 700 colleges and more than 200 high schools had taken part, it was claimed by the American Student Union which had helped to promote the event. At indoor and outdoor rallies Hitler of Germany, Mussolini of Italy and Franco of Spain were denounced as the greatest dangers of a world-wide war. Many showed overwhelming sympathy for the Spanish Loyalists. Students of Catholic colleges refused to take part. Representing 300,000 graduates, the National Catholic Alumni Federation immediately issued a statement declaring that the "strike" was not genuine, spontaneous reaction by students against war but a deliberate, deceptive attempt by subversive elements. The statement asserted that "radical influences obviously were dominant in promoting, directing and propagandizing" the rallies, and added that the American Student Union "was formed in 1934 by a combination of the National Student League, a Communist-dominated group, and the Student League for Industrial Democracy, a Socialist organization." With the union, as second chief protagonist of the "strike," stood the American League against War and Fascism, avowedly Leftist. "Its chairman is Dr. Harry F. Ward, a radical," and "one of its vice-chairmen is Earl Browder, the Communist" candidate for President. The Alumni Federation challenged university figures of student participation and asserted that a typical demonstration at Columbia University was made by many who, having no university affiliations, were "sent there probably on orders of radical organizations to swell the crowd." The statement continued: "Although this was supposed to be a meeting of American students at an American university for ostensibly an American ideal, there was no American flag in evidence. The only sign on the speakers' platform read: 'I pledge not to support the government of the United States in any war it may conduct.' Several other banners in the audience read: 'Support democracy in Spain.'"

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—Old Testament stories are being broadcast over the Columbia Broadcasting System, Sunday afternoons at 2:30, Eastern Daylight Saving Time, in "a more modern idiom than is customarily heard in biblical dramatizations." Each of the scripts written by experienced authors is submitted to an advisory committee which includes Rabbi Jonah B. Wise, Father Joseph A. Daly and Reverend Charles E. Burton. * * * Various religious groups are strongly opposed to the Hill-Sheppard War Profits Bill, supported by the American Legion, which allows industrialists a 5 percent profit in excess of peace-time profits and gives the President power to conscript for military service all males between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-one when war is declared. Labor leaders also declared that the unusual powers granted to the President for curbing the freedom of the press and controlling wages was highly dangerous to organized labor and the American people generally. * * * In the *Lutheran Herald* Honorable R. A.

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Nestos, former Governor of North Dakota, answers the question, "Why Do I Support Church Schools?" in part: "Our gravest problem today is how to handle the tremendous and growing power that is again being evidenced in our industrial and financial affairs and rapidly molding and influencing the thought, life and ideals of our country. . . . Laws alone will not solve this problem. . . . Food alone and security alone will not suffice. We will need . . . men and women accustomed to self-denial and self-discipline, who, with a fine devotion to the highest and finest ideals of private and public life, will use their 'force of ideas, genius, character, strength of will, or administrative ability to arouse or direct others in conduct or achievement.' "

"Religious" Nationalism.—What is the relation between the Christian order of salvation and the nation? The question is important, and little that has been written on the subject affords a pertinent answer. Indeed many extant books are curious productions indeed; and a recent example of this strangeness at its strangest is Walther Kampe's "Die Nation in der Heilsordnung" (Mainz-Gruenewald), which is worth reading as a statement of certain ideas with which moral theologians may have to be concerned during the next few years. One of Kampe's favorite ideas is that the nation is a kind of person, and that therefore the resurrection of the body implies also a resurrection of "peoples and races." He likewise extends the doctrine of the Mystical Body to include a union of sublimated nations, each of them "an integral component part." Some of the ablest German critics have examined the book. One of them (Dr. Erwin von Kienitz) writes: "Anyone who has felt even so much as a breath of the spirit of Pauline theology knows that such a system can have no theological foundation. For he will have sensed the passionate zeal with which the Apostle to the Gentiles fought for the idea of redemption solely through grace and the spirit, as against all Judaistic conceptions of a people chosen as a national unit by God. It is therefore apparent in accordance with this theology the nation can have no especial place in the order of redemption, but only that relative significance vis-à-vis the kingdom of God that pertains to all things else in the natural order. For the living God became Man not in order to redeem the natural bonds of race, people and nation, thus incorporating them in Himself, but in order to bring home the eternal in every individual man—home to His kingdom of the spirit and of grace."

* * * *

United States Neutrality.—Extension of legislation, to replace laws on United States neutrality, which expired on May 1, was reached by the conference committee of the Senate and the House. Leaders anticipated a quick concurrence on the compromise measure in both houses. First neutrality legislation was adopted in the summer of 1935. A provision of the new bill, to last two years, will authorize the President, when he considers it necessary to preserve peace, to put on a "cash and carry" basis all trade with belligerents or factions. Thus such governments or groups would accept complete responsibility for commodities bought in this country before they left these shores. Under such regulations as the President may prescribe, travel by American nationals on belligerent vessels would be illegal and entered upon at the individual's own risk. American merchantmen engaged in trade with belligerents would be forbidden to be armed. They could be prohibited, with the President controlling the ban, transportation of such commodities, other than arms, which might be declared contrabrand by any of the belligerents. The President is directed to include in the arms embargo the usual lethal weapons that he proclaimed April 16, 1936, "but not to include raw materials not of the same general character as those enumerated" in that proclamation. Contributions to belligerents, factions or "asserted governments" (wording which applies immediately to the Insurgents in Spain) would be banned. This does not include, however, such donations for medical aid, food or clothing as might be made to relieve human suffering. Meanwhile the House Military Affairs Committee recommended passage of a "war profits" bill giving the President wide powers to control the economic life of the country in time of war.

Against the Aluminum Monopoly.—The United States has filed suit in New York City moving for the dissolution of the $174,000,000 Aluminum Company of America controlled by the Andrew W. Mellon interests. The former Secretary of the Treasury, under Presidents Coolidge and Hoover, Paul Mellon, Jennie King Mellon and Sarah Mellon Scaife were among twenty-six defendants named. The suit, also directed against the Aluminum, Limited, and twenty-three subsidiary organizations, is the largest anti-trust action of its kind since 1911. Then the Standard Oil Company was declared a monopoly. The Aluminum Company in the complaint was described "as a holding corporation for a group of companies in all parts of the world which had stifled competition in the entire industry." The government set the net worth of the company as of December 31, 1934, per its annual report, at $174,808,682. After deducting paid in capital, Attorney General Cummings stated, this represents profits since incorporation in 1888 of $155,241,807. Over and above this figure dividend disbursements were approximately $105,000,000. "Profits of such size in supplying the public with an article of prime necessity for which there has been and will be an increasing demand, and for which there is no available substitute, are excessive and result from defendant's monopolization of this industry." The company controls railroads, power companies, steamship lines, aluminum processing and manufacturing factories and mines from which bauxite—aluminum ore—is obtained. The most recent act cited as discriminatory price-fixing was an advance on March 1 of carload prices on virgin aluminum ingots. The government importantly charged that the company had entered into agreements with foreign producers to restrict competition, limit production and allocate world markets. In reply the company stated that no past probe of many had failed to clear it of such similar charges.

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The Play and Screen

Babes in Arms

"BABES IN ARMS" is one of the gayest, most spontaneous musical comedies New York has seen in recent years. It is also unique. With three or four exceptions the performers are in their teens or at most their early twenties, and if we except Mitzi Green, who used to be a child actress in the movies, there isn't a name known to the theatre in the cast. Dwight Deere Wiman evidently set out to give youth a field-day and to prove that talent can be appreciated even if it is talent in its teens. With the help of Richard Rodgers's music, Lorenz Hart's lyrics, Robert Sinclair's staging, George Balanchine's choreography and Raymond Sovey's settings he proves it abundantly. I wish I could say as much for the book, but here Rodgers and Hart do not shine, for most of it is amateurish. But the book may well be forgotten. At least it does not get in the way of the music, the lyrics, the singing and the dancing, and all these are delightful. It is enough to say that the book has somehow to do with a troupe of children of vaudeville performers, who, to avoid going to a work-farm, put on a show which makes the town famous. There is also a French aviator who flies the Atlantic and lands in the town, who is knocked senseless by one of the youthful performers who impersonates him, and gets a landing-field established where the aviator lands. But this is all very confused, though the landing of the aviator and his waking up in bed are funny. What, however, is far out of the ordinary is Mr. Rodgers's score, and Mr. Hart's lyrics which are both witty and clean. The music and lyrics are fully as fine as those of "On Your Toes," which is saying that they are the best written today in America.

There is no star, but Miss Mitzi Green, now at the advanced age of sixteen, proves herself one of the most accomplished musical comedy comediennes on the stage. The way she puts over "The Lady Is a Tramp" is in particular a delight, but she is good in all she does. Then there are Ray Hetherton and Wynn Murray and Ray and Grace McDonald, and Duke McHale, and Harold and Fayard Nicholas—the first two notable for their singing and acting, and the others for their skilful dancing. All these young people sing, dance and act with a gusto and an infectious humor which is absolutely free of unpleasant suggestion or vulgarity. It is a relief to welcome a clean musical to Broadway. Of the musical numbers, "Babes in Arms," "Way Out West," "My Funny Valentine," "Johnny One-Note" and "The Lady Is a Tramp" will soon be sung and whistled everywhere. In short, "Babes in Arms" is, despite a lame story, delightful entertainment. (At the Shubert Theatre.)

Hitch Your Wagon

THE RIDICULOUS gyrations of a well-known male movie star in his recent courtship and marriage, a marriage which has already ended in divorce, is evidently the basis of the story told by Bernard Schoenfeld in "Hitch Your Wagon." The author's knowledge of Jewish character is shrewdly brought out in his pictures of the ambitious mother and of her very much annoyed spouse. His portrait of the daughter, the object of the alcoholic star's affections, is amusing but perhaps less veritable, while the star himself is rather of a type farce-comedy figure. Those who like farcical situations will find the play to their liking. The acting is on the whole excellent. George Curzon hasn't the slap-dash quality of the actor he is supposed to represent, but is nearer to the part than he was as Parnell last season. Dennie Moore as the girl is again Dennie Moore, delightful at least for an act and a half, but the real hits of the play are made by Joseph Greenwald and Dora Weissman as the Jewish parents. In the story of "Hitch Your Wagon" there was the opportunity to make of it another "Once in a Lifetime" and this has not been accomplished, yet the play should succeed. It possesses laughter and it contains little or nothing to offend. (At the Forty-eighth Street Theatre).

GRENVILLE VERNON.

The Prince and the Pauper

WARNER BROTHERS' screen version of the classic romantic melodrama by Mark Twain brings further evidence that the trend in motion picture production is in the visualization of stories that, over the years, have stood the test of time, changing ideas and customs. Hollywood holds that while this trend is not new, it is nevertheless a contemporarily different kind of romance. It is distinctively not toward the romance of affectionate physical or spiritual love interest, but, rather, toward the romance of adventure. And now, with the eyes of the world focused upon the coming coronation ceremonies for George VI in England, we see the years rolled back to the days of the coronation of another of England's kings—Edward VI, in the days of 1537.

One of the play's big scenes is the reproduction of the sixteenth-century coronation service in which the event that will take place shortly in London had its antecedents. As the ancient ritual and paraphernalia are reproduced in authentic detail, the atmosphere takes on a topical significance. All of the rich pageantry and crude magnificence of the English court following the death of Henry VIII were created by studio artizans who fabricated the film's sets from paintings by Holbein.

As a foreword to the tale, Mark Twain wrote, "This is not a history, but a tale of once upon a time, so it may have happened, it may not have happened, but it could have happened." Thus do the producers depend on the author to protect them against issues taken with the historical facts of the narrative. "The Prince and the Pauper" was ably directed by William Keighley from a screen play by Laird Doyle, who tells with a fine clarity the story of the beggar lad of Offal Court and his changing places with the boy Prince Edward, coming within an inch of kingship in place of the rightful heir. The title rôles are played, with good results, by Billy and Bobby Mauch, the twelve-year-old twins. A special musical score, an important factor, was created for the picture by the noted European composer, Erich Wolfgang Korngold.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

THE TRUTH ABOUT SPAIN

Talihina, Okla.

TO the Editor: Josh Billings once said, "It ain't ignorance that makes all the trouble, but knowin' so many things that ain't so." We are reminded of this when those who would remake the world, after some "planned" utopia, orate emotionally, ecstatically and almost hysterically, offering impassioned invective for argument and palpable falsities for truths. Mr. Norman Thomas is an excellent example because of the warmth of his emotions, his engaging impudence, and his scorn for facts. He seldom fails to inspire, by his remarks, arguments to refute him, but, unfortunately, it is not possible, because of the obvious limitations of time and space, to stop him in full career and nail him to the wall in the midst of his knowledge of the "many things that ain't so."

On the radio Thursday night, February 18, before America's Town Meeting, Mr. Thomas took advantage of the time and place to make a number of statements about Spain that were misleading and untrue. It is always unfortunate that such falsehoods can be expressed in a few words, while the refutations involve the presentation of facts requiring many words and much time. Mr. Thomas is either abysmally ignorant of the facts or is intentionally misleading. The grisly horrors committed by the savages of Spain's so-called Popular Front are too well known and too dreadful to be repeated here, and the testimony is too abundant and trustworthy to be questioned. Mr. Thomas smugly ignores this vindictive savagery, and then is tearfully indignant when some perpetrator is caught and punished.

The European parliamentary system, with its multiplicity of futile political parties, was the background and foundation for the coalition composing the so-called Popular Front. In this, a very small minority held the balance of power, because without the parties forming this minority the coalition would have been obliged to change its complexion by handing the balance of power to the conservative parties on the right.

As the price of their help in forming a government the radicals demanded that their followers be permitted to enjoy the expected fruits of a radical victory; that is, they insisted that they be free to "liquidate" those opposed to radicalism. The radical leaders quickly "muscled in" on the government itself, and a reign of terror began. Churches were ravaged and burned, religious institutions of education and beneficence, charity and refuge, were crashed and the inmates subjected to every horror and violent death. The homes of respectable people were invaded and pillaged and the inmates taken out to be tortured and killed. It was a reign of terror carried out by mobs of bloodthirsty savages greedy for pillage The leaders called themselves Socialists, Anarchists, Communists, Liberals, and what not. They had many diverse and contradictory political and economic ideas, but they possessed one purpose in common: the total extinction of Chistianity by the direct process of killing every person suspected of believing it, and especially those known to practise it by obeying its precepts.

It was this terror that aroused the decent people of Spain to recover their government from such savages, to restore order and the protection of life and property, and the liberty to profess and practise their religious faith. It is more than significant that those who would establish here the filthy atheist savagery prevailing in Russia are the ones most eager in defending the so-called government of Spain. To call such a government "democratic" is insufferable impudence that, were it not so frightfully diabolical, would suggest comparison with the wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood."

Though Mr. Thomas and his kind will deny, or at least deplore, these many atrocities when confronted with them in public, we may feel well assured that when they forgather in private they gleefully exult at the burning alive of priests, the outraging and butchery of nuns, the killing of those noted for probity and piety, the destruction of hospitals, asylums, schools and colleges, conducted by religious orders, and the tearing down of churches. We have seen all this going on in Mexico at intervals for more than a century, and the United States government has never failed to step in with its armed forces and diplomatic chicane to protect the perpetrators of such savageries whenever they have been threatened with defeat. Mr. Thomas thus has many precedents sustaining him in his attitude, but they do no credit whatever to his intelligence or his assumed sense of decency and fair play.

The facts of history are so readily available that it would be an unkind reflection upon the erudition of Mr. Thomas to suggest that he believes what he says. We can, therefore, only pay him the doubtful compliment of being diabolically clever in marshaling as many as he has in the ranks of his following. If he has not abandoned intellectual honesty altogether, for the doubtful profits of a questionable political racket, he will pause to reflect upon the facts of history which a man of his scholarly attainments must have read. A diligent, fair and honest devotion to this effort will lead him to but one conclusion.

EBER COLE BYAM.

CRUSADE FOR INCREASED PREACHING

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Last summer I traveled in Germany and studied there the position of the Catholic Church. I was especially shocked by the ugly anti-Catholic campaign in the press. In personal interviews with some German bishops, I was told that the Church had no press to defend itself—no public voice—press and radio being in the hands of the government.

One day a German Catholic leader told me something which I can never forget. He said: "We still have a great weapon in our hands, and this is preaching. Think of it, if we make good use of our sacred mission to preach and to teach, how far-reaching can be our influence." This truly classical view expressed in a country where the Church is persecuted, has impressed me greatly. The preaching of the Word of God is regarded in a suffering

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Church as the greatest means to defend itself. And I have witnessed myself, in a little country church of Bavaria, in a very eloquent sermon, that the German Church is making good use of this weapon.

Now is not the same thing needed in our own great country? Let us listen to distinguished priests. In his remarkable book, "The Priesthood in a Changing World," Father O'Brien writes: "In probably no phase of our priestly ministry has there been such widespread deficiency as in this divinely appointed task of preaching the Gospel of Christ." And a bishop wrote: "The time for the awakening to the importance of preaching is now. You cannot sound a note that would be too loud or too stirring on that subject."

We live in a disturbed world. Our people are craving for spiritual food. They want to cling to a rock on which to hold fast in times of worries and uncertainties. How often do these people come to church eager to hear the Word of God but have to leave the church disappointed. People sitting in darkness do not receive light. Immortal souls craving for bread receive stones. What do our people do? They listen to good speakers of the world who often ignore God or offend him openly. This certainly should not be. Has anyone a more exalted and glorious subject to talk about than our Catholic priests? Is there any reason that a woman talking about literature in one of our women's clubs should hold the audience more spellbound than a minister talking about God and His eternal Truths, making us understand its mysteries and love its beauties? No, a thousand times no! There is and never will be anything more beautiful than the vital dealing with the Word of God.

In order to bring the attention of all our priests to this Divine task, an earnest and most important movement, a Crusade for Better and More Preaching, has been started in several parts of the country. May all priests of this great country which God so far has generously spared from terrible persecution, join with us in this movement of better preaching, before it is too late, and souls are lost in a revolutionary spirit as in Spain, Russia and Mexico today.

The Holy Ghost, Spirit of Fiery Tongues, will lead the way. I most earnestly beg every reader of this letter to ask the Holy Ghost to convince every preacher, be he Catholic or Protestant, not to lose courage in his sacred mission of preaching conscientiously and untiringly, Sunday after Sunday, the Word of God.

H. E. Froelicher.

HOLLYWOOD BISHOPS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Broadway gossip, seeping to Columbus Circle, attributes the large audiences witnessing "Richard II," in the St. James Theatre, to the abdication of Edward VIII, at the Court of St. James's, which is as valid as one reason for Shakespeare's alleged Catholicity: that he omitted, in "King John," a farcical scene offensive to the Pope. Richard Garnett was of the opinion that, aside from dramatic taste, the prosaic reason was "his bread and butter."

"Richard II" needs no Windsor to boost the box-office. Edmund Gosse would be satisfied with the presentation of "the vigor of this stirring play, the great opportunities which it affords—the higher intellectual quality—the subtle delineation of character—a piece of divination." What the ear occasionally misses may be pardoned by the eye thoroughly satisfied, until the Bishop of Carlisle and the Abbot of Westminster enter. Their Catholicity is beyond doubt; their regalia is beyond belief.

When Sir Henry Irving presented Victorien Sardou's "Dante," there was a pompous prelate, in cope and miter, carrying a tremendous crozier, who strutted through the streets of Florence to fling the prison key of his enemy from a bridge into the deep.

The prelates in "Richard II" must have been accoutered by Hollywood. Said His Lordship of Carlisle to Bolingbroke: "What subject can give sentence on his king?" Is a bishop a subject for criticism? Not his conduct but his costume. My Lord of Carlisle and the Abbot of Westminster wear towering miters—the two-story model shown in catalogues. Or were their Lordships costumed by Madam Toussaud? Both wear copes of the ultra French decadent style, an anachorism. What! (His Grace of Canterbury will wear a cope at the coming Coronation, but it will accord with medieval design.)

When will the theatre learn that a bishop does not wear pontificals at court functions, or tournaments, or tortures? If he must be arrayed in Solomon stage raiment, he need not be made effeminate with trailing lace. There are period plates of apparel for ecclesiastics, as for knights and ladies fair, to guide designers. Even if engravings were lacking, there are effigies on tombs. The designer of "Richard II" could find bishops, monks and hermits correctly garbed in Pugin's "Glossary of Christian Ornament"—fine colored plates reproduced from the collection of the British Museum. The fifteenth century is not the twentieth.

Perhaps the critics may tell us why the Abbot of Westminster wears a black cope on festive occasion. Maybe he vested in anticipation of Richard defunct; or is the black symbolic of his Lordship's soul?

Rev. Peter Moran, C.S.P.

DEGRADATION OF DEMOCRACY

Southport, Conn.

TO the Editor: I wish to thank you for the marked copy of The Commonweal of April 9, which was sent to me. With regard to the letter from Van Wyck Brooks and R. L. Duffus, I would say that I received from them a copy of the letter regarding the Spanish situation, which I declined to sign. In the letter to your journal, they say that two authors did likewise, so I suppose that I am one of the two. I presume that they did not use my name in connection with the matter, although I did not see the earlier communication to you. At any rate, I am not in sympathy with their point of view, and through my grandmother, who was a Spanish woman, I am one-quarter Spanish by descent.

James Truslow Adams.

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Books

If Rip Van Winkle Awoke

Middletown in Transition, by Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.00.

THIS is a social analysis of a small inland city, and presents an interesting cross-section of small-city life in the United States. The book is a sequel to an earlier volume by the same authors, entitled "Middletown." The latter volume was based on an investigation covering the city's life from the years 1885 to 1925; the present book covers the eventful decade that followed, carrying the story forward to 1936. The method used in both instances was the same. Paintakingly the various institutions and activities of the city were studied by a corps of workers who merged their lives with the day-by-day life of the city.

In order to facilitate comparisons, the general plan and organization of "Middletown" are followed in the case of "Middletown in Transition." Much the same items are covered in both instances—work and leisure, home life and religion, the dependent and government, health and education, the press and "The Middletown Spirit." Still, there are some differences. The twenty-nine chapters of the earlier study are here compressed to thirteen. Another difference consists in the fact that special attention is given in "Middletown in Transition" to certain features, such as the response of both business people and the working class to the policies of the New Deal, the far-reaching influence over all community institutions on the part of the descendants of a certain prominent and wealthy pioneer family—matters which were given little or no attention in the previous volume.

The authors point to at least some change in all the institutions studied—the least in the case of religion. In some instances, they say, "bench marks" of change still remained in 1935, and, while they do not prophesy about the future, they admit here and there that perhaps the seed of eventual major social change has been sown. Yet, in spite of the title of the volume, "Middletown in Transition," no fundamental change is admitted. The authors conclude that the eventful years, 1925 to 1936, produced no profound alteration in the point of view of Middletown folks, no genuine cultural change. "Basically the texture of Middletown culture has not changed. . . . Middletown is overwhelmingly living by the values by which it lived in 1925; and the chief additions are defensive, negative elaborations of already existing values. . . . In the main, a Rip Van Winkle, fallen asleep in 1925 while addressing Rotary or the Central Labor Union, could have awakened in 1935 and gone right on with his interrupted address to the same people with much the same ideas" (pages 489-490).

The Lynds admit that, in spite of all effort to correct bias, "research without a point of view is impossible." At least occasionally their point of view seems to show itself in their comments and interpretations. But, beyond doubt, they have done an excellent piece of work. "Mid-

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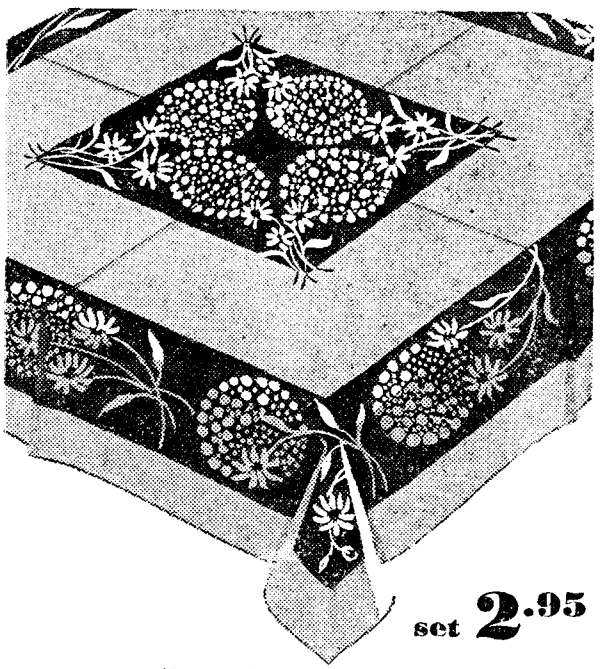

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dletown in Transition" is both an interesting and valuable book. And undoubtedly a hundred years or more from now, it will be no less valuable and even more intensely interesting. Like their earlier volume, "Middletown in Transition" is destined to become a classic.

EDGAR SCHMIEDELER.

Uranian Indecision

Whitman, by Edgar Lee Masters. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

WHITMAN'S life is a nice illustration of the thesis that no disguise is so effective as apparent openness. His romantic grey costume and his florid, imposing good-looks made him as conspicuous a personage in Camden as a Grey Friar would have been in eighteenth-century London. He fondled children and he chatted with everyone. Awe was not commonly aroused by his picturesque presence. To the ferryman who carried him back and forth to Philadelphia free of charge he was "that old gas-bag," a title of fame but not reverent fame. Nor did his writings tend to obscure his personality—on the contrary they enhanced its enormously and at times outrageously. His self-revelations in any age would have caused an appraising lift of the eye, and his present biographer murmurously admits that his coarseness is offensive to him "for esthetic reasons," but in Whitman's own age they caused staring scandal for moral reasons. Inevitably, certain English middle-class liberals took up this jolly primitive of fresh sensibilities, liberal ideology, and kindred tongue, who symbolized the remote, exotic, futuristic American democracy. On this side of the water equally respectable middle-class people were, with some notable exceptions like Emerson, "not amused." Perhaps the age failed miserably to discriminate between its conventions and the moral principles they were set to guard, however imperfectly; but at any rate it did not fail to discern the tendency of the moral principles that Whitman appeared to embody.

Unless private papers of which we do not know be turned up, the significant facts of Whitman's life will probably stand as Mr. Masters puts them. He has some charming pages on the family background and the Long Island boyhood of the poet. The pages which tell of Whitman nursing during the Civil War, and of the latter years of the prematurely aged man, seem to me worthy of appreciative notice here. But when all is told, it is surprising how much we still do not know about the poet, and how much Mr. Masters has been forced by the paucity of direct evidence to conjecture. Whitman's letters of travel are perfunctory; he is strikingly vague in disclosing the contents of his experience apart from his extraordinarily wordy "catalogues" of names and nothing besides.

Mr. Masters is very clear in fixing the significance of the poet Whitman, as he sees it. "He prophesied an ever-growing land and he wanted to give it a song by which to steady and advance its steps. . . . He was never the Homer of America; at best he was our Hesiod, writing 'Works and Days' in terms of what America was and meant, and what its rightful destiny was."

Mr. Masters offers a very interesting interpretation of the nature of Whitman's personality. In some of his characteristics he was masculine and virile, in others feminine and womanly. Mr. Masters reproves the indelicacy of those who think Whitman a pervert. His character, he says, is that of a Uranian, a very sensitive nature of ambivalent powers, exercised mainly it would appear in the realm of the imagination. Mr. Masters also develops an argument whereby it appears that Whitman is the political heir, in his poetry, of Jefferson's philosophy of government; mixed with Jeffersonism are elements of "the philosophy of evolution" and Hegelianism; but in fine Whitman was not a systematic theorist.

Whitman's Uranianism, if I may be allowed the word, has an aspect of emotional formlessness in it. Uranianism may conceivably mark a structural deformity in a creative will poised and undetermined in its allegiance to man's nature or to woman's. The huddled and plotless dreams of children, the mutually incongruous plans which they sometimes hatch, are familiar and undisturbing illustrations of the emotional and intellectual fumbles that are conceivably like Uranian experiences. Whitman's "catalogues" have the appearance of such fumbles, not infrequently, as though he could not organize his impressions into a body more articulate than a massy heap. His nerveless, sprawling verse is also, one is inclined to think, a manifestation of suspended or defective power of articulation. Whitman, under this view, appears as a somewhat childish giant earnestly fumbling with Uranian indecisiveness among words. His coarseness and his indecent boasting appear as the attempts of a masculine nature to assert itself against a stultifying partnership. Certainly Whitman sometimes managed to make poetry of genuine nervous force and brilliant form, and from it the tone of emotional strain and strangeness is absent.

Mr. Masters does not deal with the childish Whitman; his Whitman is all-Uranian. It would have been more illuminating if he had approached the vague areas of Whitman's thought with a more resolute independence from Uranianism.

ANDREW CORRY.

For the Children

The Golden Hour, by Various Writers. New York: Wise Book Company. $29.80.

AN EFFORT to create a modern, well-written and satisfactorily balanced "library" for young readers may seem presumptuous, but "The Golden Hour" appears to prove that it can be done. Here are twenty volumes of uniform size, all beautifully illustrated and printed. And what is vastly more important—though format in children's books cannot be too heavily stressed—the authors know what they are about and how to do it. Naturally there is some difference in the age-level of the several books, but for the most part all envisage the longest possible number of years during which a child will be interested in specifically juvenile literature. The temper is wholesome. There is neither an offensive breeziness nor an undue dependence on exotic material. Even religious

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concerns are not overlooked, though to be sure they are treated in a most elementary and general way.

Roughly speaking, the books fall into four sections: folk-lore, nature interests, activities and imaginative writing. Tales have been gathered from American, Indian, Hawaiian and other sources. Representative, it seems to me, is W. T. Larned's "American Indian Fairy Tales," illustrated by John Rae. The strictly imaginative books also have a definite folk-lore basis. Thus "The Skating Gander" is highly reminiscent of "Hans Brinker," though Alice Cooper Bailey none the less tells a story quite her own about that picturesque Holland which has always fascinated young people.

Elizabeth Gordon's garden books—there are four of them—would almost suffice to justify the existence of the series. They supply information about plants and animals familiar to everybody who lives even as near the country as a suburb can get. There is really a lot of fascinating reading-matter in "The Turned-Into's" and "Buddy Jim," to mention just two. If children are to love nature they must begin early and be coaxed into keeping it up. They don't come by a fondness even for birds spontaneously.

The activities books are likewise good. It is absorbing to see how geography can be linked to what every child does, as one looks through Gertrude Alice Kay's "Adventures in Geography." Parents and teachers alike will find the two books about words most helpful. But so is the whole set. One could probably find something to criticize here and there. With what can no fault be found? But the idea is good and its expression genuinely commendable.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Religious Teaching

Proceedings of the National Catechetical Congress. Volume II. Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press. $1.00.

WHEN the nation was young, a handful of isolated priests ministered to a scattered faithful. Did those missionaries sometimes wonder whether the chalice, or the few catechisms, begged from the old country and squeezed into saddle-bag or birch canoe and presently to be left and treasured in rude clearings and sprawling villages, were immediately the more important? For unless people are taught will not Sacrifice and sacrifice fade from their lives?

Today in a greater nation a greater Church is challenged by the same problems that faced Bishop Carroll and his heroic company, problems comparable in magnitude and complexity to any current in government, industry and economics, but of greater import.

Last October in New York City, the National Confraternity of Christian Doctrine attracted thousands of faithful—laity, religious and clergy—from every corner of our land to a four days' congress that dealt with the particular problem of the religious instruction of the young. The Confraternity's handbook just published contains a half-hundred addresses: reports and aspirations, sober and enthusiastic, and dealing with religious vaca-

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Next Week

THE COMMONWEAL is devoting its next issue to a commemoration of the issuance of Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical "On the Condition of the Working Classes" May 15, 1891, and Pope Pius VI's Encyclical "On the Reconstruction of the Social Order," May 15, 1931. Monsignor John A. Ryan, Director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and well-known champion of the American working man, will contribute a feature article appropriate for the occasion. . . . Richard Dana Skinner contributes OWNERS IN BONDAGE, a study of J. L. Benvenisti's "The Iniquitous Contract" which views the modern credit capitalism system in the light of the age-old teaching of the Church concerning usury. Mr. Skinner's article is an attack on the threat to private ownership and individual liberty inherent in the modern debt system that dominates the economic system of today. . . . THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS, by Pierre Crabitès, is a defense of President Roosevelt's Supreme Court reorganization plan. After pointing out the revolutionary character of a constitutional amendment comprehensive enough to accomplish the administration's aims, Judge Crabitès says, "I consider what I frankly call 'packing' the Supreme Court the lesser of the two evils because my faith in the inherent integrity of the American people is such that I am convinced that this solution will not place dishonest or incompetent men on the Court." . . . A LAYMAN ANSWERS, by John Farrow, Hollywood director, husband of Maureen O'Sullivan and author of "Damien the Leper," is a plain-spoken, categorical denial of the principal charges made by Peter Whiffin in his recent *Forum* article.

tion schools, the school-year religious instruction of the public school child, adult study clubs, and parental training in the religious education at home of their children—a small encyclopedia.

The gathering was soul-stirring. The book reveals an organization undreamed of by our forgotten pioneers. But without their strong faith and sacrificing spirit the plans can remain only plans.

The mission of the changeless Church remains the same: to offer in Sacrifice the Word of God, to teach God's word, to sanctify men's souls in the America of our day. For as America fumbles with confusing counsels and falters toward her destiny, the Confraternity calls every Catholic man and woman to save our children and it offers them the means of doing so.

JOHN K. SHARP.

Mother and Son

Alli's Son, by Magnhild Haalke; translated by Arthur G. Chater. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

THIS novel comes to readers of English sponsored by Sigrid Undset, who when the book came out in Norway called the attention of her American publisher to it. "I think it is really a great first novel," wrote Madame Undset to Mr. Knopf, "and we are sure to hear more of Mrs. Haalke."

"Alli's Son" is a powerful novel. It depicts the struggle of the simple, oversensitive mother with the difficult child. Alli, the young wife whose sailor husband has left her and her little boy to live with the grandparents, is no match for either the dominating grandmother or the masterful child. "Her mind was not a particularly deep or clear one. How should it be? And how was her boy to be helped on the road he seemed inclined to take?" Thus ruminated the sympathetic schoolmaster in his efforts to save the two. The road the boy did take keeps the reader breathless, following him from his first appearance on the opening page to the tragedy at the close. This strange child with his keenness, his uncanny intuitions, his wildness, is a masterpiece of characterization. Alli, too, is powerfully etched. An intensely human creature she stands, this distraught young mother, whether scolding and nagging in moods of vexation, or cajoling and coaxing in hours of terror.

The entire action takes place on a tiny island off the coast of Norway, and the sea sweeps Mrs. Haalke's story as pitilessly as it lashes the Irish tales of Synge or O'Sullivan or O'Crohan. The author fits her style to her theme and her peope. Her language is so simple that the sheriff's two big words treasured by the child—"I am in raptures over this island world. The sea is marvellous," he had said—stand out like their own great rock in the bay. And her descriptive touches are exquisite. "The writing is so natural that it is like a piece of real life," is the translator's characterization of the style. The naturalness as well as the starkness is carried over into the English version. Surely a remarkable first novel, "Alli's Son" leaves one watching for his successors.

CHARLOTTE M. MEAGHER.

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Foreign Correspondents

We Cover the World; edited by Eugene Lyons. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.00.

THROUGH these pages of exciting copy, Eugene Lyons, himself a foreign correspondent, has brought together fifteen others of his own profession, to give us an insight into the fascinating work of collecting the news. Here our news gatherers are allowed to present their material less formally than when it was first published, and proceeding from article to article one cannot but be impressed at the tremendous odds a reporter must contend with in order to satisfy his boss, the country he is in, and the world in general. Dynamic news stories are presented by James A. Mills, Karl von Wiegand, Frazier Hunt, Linton Wells, Negley Farson, Hallett Abend, Junius B. Wood, William Henry Chamberlin, George Seldes, Mary Knight, Frank H. Hedges, Randall Gould, Jack Starr-Hunt, H. R. Ekins, Webb Miller, and also by the editor.

A Reflective Traveler

My European Diary, by Daniel A. Lord, S. J. St. Louis, Mo.: The Queen's Work. $2.00.

NOTES started by Father Lord as a substitute for letters to friends have evolved into an intimate and interesting journal of his day by day travel in the different cities he passed through on the Continent, in England, and in the Irish Republic. The minute he walked up the gangplank he set his pencil to work taking notes of his fellow passengers. Then he went on with his record, to Pompeii, Naples, Rome, Florence and Venice, giving a colorful picture of his impressions of the Catacombs, churches and art galleries, and the human qualities of those cities. This was repeated in Vienna, Paris, Brussels, London and Dublin. In his Foreword he claims that his friends were the ones who forced him into the position of putting his notes into book form. Also he informs us that nothing that would be used in head-lines ever happened to him. His book reveals that the simple things of life are just as valuable and can be as entertaining as "thrills and escapades."

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